GEERT MAAS

SCULPTING LEGACIES

WRITTEN BY LORENZ PLOURDE IN COLLABORATION
WITH GEERT AND ELLY MAAS

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ISBN 978-1-0679178-0-7 (PDF)

Published by
Geert Maas Sculpture Gardens and Gallery
Kelowna, British Columbia, Canada

Book design and editing assistance:
Lorenz Plourde – Process Art Discovery

Cover image: Geert Maas Sculpture Gardens and Gallery
Additional photographs courtesy of the Maas family archive.

This book documents the life and work of internationally acclaimed sculptor Geert Maas and the shared artistic journey he built with his wife and partner Elly Maas

To Geert and Elly Maas —

For your vision, your resilience, and your lifelong devotion to art, each other, and the world around you.

This book is dedicated to the legacy you've built not only in bronze and brushstroke but in generosity, integrity, and the quiet power of purpose.

May your story continue to inspire long after the last page is turned.

Lorenz Plourde

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

Introduction 3

Early Life and Education (1944, 1961-1969) 6

The 100-Year-Old Brick Farmhouse (June 1971-December 1979) 11

Where Ideas Came From 18

Selling the Farmhouse 19

Moving to Canada in December of 1979 21

Differences between Canada and the Netherlands 30

Early Canadian Life (1982-1989) 31

The Vancouver Client 1990 October 52

Not In the Bedroom 1991 November 53

1992 "Silkscreens: Capturing Motion and Moment" 54

'Circle of Friendship' monument 62

1997 BCTV feature with Geert Maas 64

1998 Art International New York: Geert Maas on the Global Stage 65

Passion and Vision 66

New Millennium Expansion (2000-2024) 69

2000 Ancestry - Unveiling Depth and Connection Through Sculpture 70

2000 Geert Maas International Artist - People of Vision CHBC TV 72

2001 The Work of Geert Maas with Mike Roberts 76

On the Beach 82

Page

How On the Beach was created 85

Goddesses of the Universe 86

The 20th Anniversary 88

The Kelowna Centennial Time Capsule 91

2006 Bellevue Sculpture Exhibition: A Global Stage 95

Spirit Of Kelowna Project (2007-2008) 97

2009: Destiny Sculptures 105

2010: A Year of Celebrations and Monumental Achievements 108

2011: 'Okanagan Eyes, Okanagan Wise, Okanagan-ise' 110

2013-2014: A Journey Through Artistic Expressions 112

2015-2016: The Beauty of Animals – An Art Medal Journey 113

2017: A Year of International Artistic Engagement 115

2018: A Year of Milestones and Global Connections 116

2019: A Year of Creative Sparks and New Horizons 117

2020: A Residency to Remember at Castle d'Orquevaux 119

2021: A Year of Expansive Exhibitions – Japan and Ontario 120

2023: FIDEM XXXVII - Florence, Italy 121

2024: Celebrating International Sculpture Day (27 April 2024) 122

Inside the Gallery and Permanent Collection 124

CURRICULUM VITAE 133

Epilogue 150

INTRODUCTION

In the tranquil landscapes of Nijmegen, where the whispers of history blend with the rustle of the wind, Geert Maas was born on August 29th in 1944 into a world torn by war yet brimming with the resilient beauty of human creativity. This documentary unfolds the story of a man whose life is a vibrant canvas, painted with the bold strokes of ambition, the subtle hues of introspection, and the rich colors of passion for art.

From an early age, Geert was captivated by the forms and figures that danced from the brush strokes and chisels of past masters. Each piece of art told a story, and young Geert listened, his mind and heart wide open to the tales of light, shadow, and form.

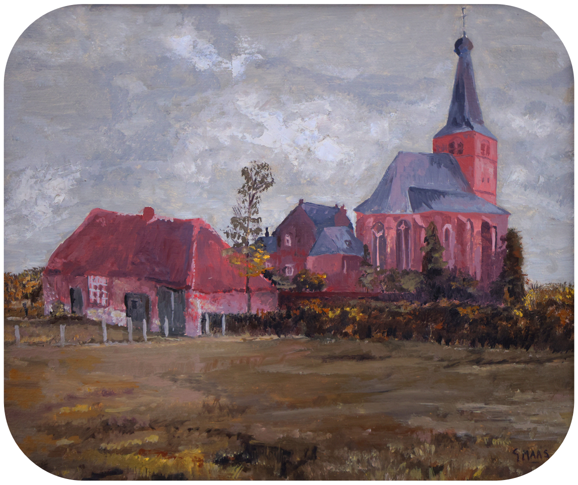
His journey from the cobbled streets of Nijmegen to the vibrant art scene of The Hague was not just a physical relocation; it was a pilgrimage towards finding his own artistic voice amidst the echoes of the greats. We are transported to the vibrant classrooms and studios of the Academy of Art in The Hague during the late 1960s, where Geert's artistic identity was crafted amidst the tumult of cultural shifts. Here, amidst the echoes of classical art and the rising tide of modernism, Geert not only refined his technique in sculpture, ceramics, and painting but also met Elly, his future wife and lifelong collaborator. Their partnership blossomed into a dynamic creative union, one that eventually prompted a bold relocation to Canada, seeking new landscapes and inspirations..

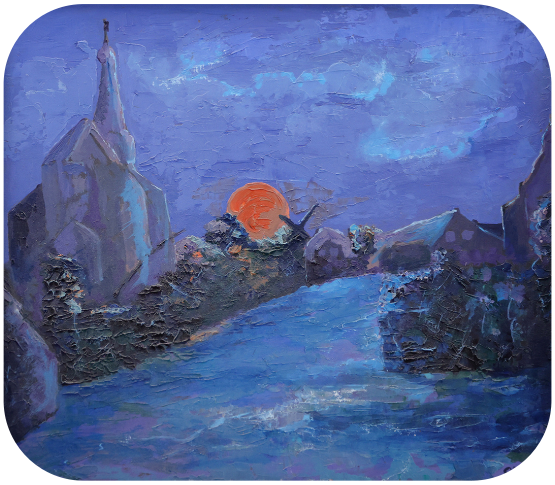
Settling in Kelowna, British Columbia, Geert's talent blossomed. Surrounded by majestic landscapes that mirror his expansive approach to art, his work took on new dimensions, influenced by the diverse cultural fabric of Canada. Each piece created during this period was not only a reflection of his mastery over materials like bronze, aluminum, and terracotta but also a dialogue with the world around him.

Our exploration of Geert Maas's life—from his early days in The Netherlands to his creative flourishing in Canada—reveals not just the artist but the man behind the art. His story is one of relentless pursuit of expression and an unyielding commitment to artistic integrity.

Through his sculptures and paintings, Geert has dialogued with themes of heritage, human emotion, and the universal quest for meaning, leaving a tangible impact on the world's artistic landscape.

Geert himself came from a large family, though touched by the passage of time. He had four brothers and one sister. As time marched on, the family circle grew smaller. "Except one who is seven years younger than I am, they all passed away," Geert reflects with a poignant mix of resignation and disbelief. The surviving brother, Marius, is now 75, a retired high school teacher who specialized in Dutch language, keeping the threads of family and heritage intact from the Netherlands.





The oldest Maas sibling, Jan, was a university professor, an expert in geography who spoke eight languages fluently. His intellectual prowess was a point of pride in the family, though his life was cut short by leukemia, the same disease that claimed their brother Cor. Cor was a technician, known for his inventive mind, who spent his career at Philips, engineering new machines.

Their brother Henk was the electrician of the family, the practical and grounding force who helped with the renovations of their farmhouse. Meanwhile, their sister Gerda dedicated her life to social work, helping others until she passed away at the age of 83.

Geert Maas is an artist whose work transcends the conventional boundaries of sculpture and painting to explore a rich tapestry of human experience and emotion. Renowned for his mastery in handling diverse materials such as bronze, aluminum, and terracotta, Maas crafts pieces that are not only visually striking but also deeply imbued with meaning. His art often incorporates elements of the human figure, abstract forms, and vibrant landscapes, reflecting his profound connection to both nature and the human condition.

Through his sculptures and paintings, Maas engages in a dynamic dialogue with viewers, inviting them to explore themes of ancestry, identity, and the universal quest for understanding.

As an artist, Maas stands out for his unique ability to blend classical techniques with modern expressions, making his work both timeless and contemporary. His approach is marked by a deliberate interplay of light and shadow, form and space, which brings each piece to life with a palpable sense of emotion and narrative depth. Whether in the quiet solitude of his studio or the collaborative atmosphere of international exhibitions, Geert Maas remains committed to pushing the boundaries of artistic expression. His works are not only celebrated for their aesthetic beauty but also for their capacity to provoke thought, evoke emotion and inspire conversations about the essential elements of human life and culture.

This documentary invites you to walk the path that Geert Maas has carved through the world of art—a journey marked by persistence, innovation, and the relentless pursuit of beauty. As we explore his life and works, you are invited to delve into the essence of creativity itself, witnessing how one man’s vision can become a beacon for cultural heritage and artistic exploration.

We hope that this journey with Geert not only enlightens but also inspires, offering a profound reflection on the broader human experience and the transformative power of art. May this documentary motivate you to explore your own creativity and understand how it can be a force for shaping a richer, more textured world.

Early Life and Education

In the tumultuous year of 1944, amid the chaos of World War II, Geert was born on August 29th in the Canisius Hospital in Nijmegen and moved to the village of Heijen in the Netherlands. The immediacy of war shadowed his first days; the Germans had occupied his village, and with the British just across the river, the little village quickly became a dangerous frontline. The Maas family, like many others, was given just 24 hours to evacuate. Geert, only days old, was nestled among blankets in a pram as his family prepared to flee.

As Geert’s family retreated, Geert's father ingeniously secured the pram to a German military vehicle to ease his passage. Realizing the danger that his infant son might end up unknowingly with the German forces, he made a swift decision to detach the pram as they neared the border.

They found refuge in a wooden shack in Slagharen, originally a changing room for soccer players, now repurposed to shelter two families. This humble abode, far from the comfort of home, shielded them from the war raging outside. It was there, in that cramped space, that Geert spent from 15 November 1944 till 20 June 1945, an unwitting witness to the realities of war.

After the war, returning to Heijen revealed a village scarred by conflict. The hidden caches of food they had buried, hopeful of return, had been discovered and plundered. But it was also a time of adventure for Geert. The heathlands around the village, littered with remnants of war—bullets, shells, even unexploded grenades—became a playground for the children. They collected these dangerous relics with naive oblivion to their peril, trading them as scrap metal.

Amidst this post-war recovery, Geert found solace in soccer and art. His artistic journey began quite by accident during the monotony of elementary school tasks. When tasked with copying simple images, he quickly grew bored and began adding elements from his own imagination.

Though his teacher disapproved, this act of creative defiance sparked something within him—a desire to create that went beyond the mundane. A transformative figure in Geert's life was a local painter, a man who by day painted houses but by night retreated to his studio in a church basement—a sanctuary filled with canvases, art books, and the smell of turpentine. It was here that Geert was truly introduced to the vast world of art.

This painter not only taught him about brushwork and color but also exposed him to the broader narratives of art history, fueling his ambition to pursue art as more than just a hobby.

Through sheer perseverance and resilience, Geert emerged from these early trials with a clear vision for his life's work.

He continued his formal education in art, dedicating himself to mastering sculpture, ceramics, model drawing, and painting at the Academy of Art in The Hague (Vrije Academy). It was there, in the vibrant, creative environment of the academy, that our paths first crossed—an encounter that would eventually lead to a lifelong partnership both in life and in art.

At the Vrije Academy of Art in The Hague, Geert's days were consumed by a rigorous blend of creativity and discipline. The academy was a forge where his potential as an artist was intensely shaped. He dedicated himself to sculpture, ceramics, model drawing, and painting, finding each discipline adding depth and breadth to his artistic voice.

These years were foundational, not just in mastering techniques but in shaping his philosophical approach to art.

Each piece Geert created during this time was a step towards defining his unique style. He often spoke of the academy as a place where the echoes of historical masters seemed to blend seamlessly with the avant-garde currents of the day.

It was here that Geert's artistic identity began to crystallize, influenced by both the classical traditions and the contemporary innovations that the school embraced.

My first encounter with Geert's world was a revelation. "When I entered Geert's apartment for the first time, it felt like stepping into a new universe. Scattered across the floor were sculptures that one had to navigate around,". It was here, amidst these physical and metaphorical obstacles, that I first encountered the blend of chaos and beauty that defined Geert's art.

Geert, half in jest, warned me of the necessity of embracing art within their relationship. I am known for my straightforward Dutch candor. He was everything I didn’t envision in a partner—too young, too unconventional. And the art? It was alien to me. Yet, these early challenges sparked a curiosity about the artistic passion that so clearly defined him.

Schlegelstraat
128
130
132

As I spent more time in Geert's presence, particularly in the transformative space of his makeshift studio in a school basement, my appreciation deepened.

Watching Geert's work, seeing his intense focus and physical commitment to each piece, I began to grasp the essence of his art. This intimate exposure to the creative process gradually shifted my perception from a bewildered observer to an engaged participant.

While Geert was immersed in his studies, I was drawn to his unwavering commitment to art. We met at a student exhibition where his work stood out for its raw, emotive power. Even then, his sculptures bore the hallmarks of his signature style: a robust handling of materials combined with a delicate sensitivity to form. It wasn't just his talent that captured my heart, but his passion and the earnest way he spoke about his dreams of making art that mattered.

As Geert's career began to take shape, so did our life together. In the late 1960s, after his graduation from the Academy of Art in The Hague, Geert's artistic journey led us to many exciting, yet challenging experiences.

His passion for sculpture and painting continued to flourish, and his reputation began to grow within the local art communities. It was during this period that Geert embarked on professional endeavors that would significantly shape his career.

In the fall of 1968, as The Hague buzzed with the spirit of change and innovation, our lives took a momentous turn. We were introduced to a vibrant circle of artists, sculptors, and patrons who were keen on exploring and pushing the boundaries of contemporary art. These interactions were pivotal, they not only broadened Geert’s artistic network but also deepened his understanding of the art world's dynamics.

The conversations and critiques that filled those gatherings in dimly lit galleries and lively studios fueled Geert’s ambition to leave an indelible mark on the art world. It quickly became evident that we were destined to build a life together.

By March of 1969, we were engaged, and on May 9, 1969, we married in a civil ceremony at City Hall. This was followed by a church wedding on June 20th, celebrated with Geert's students and colleagues—a vivid testament to the integrated life of teaching and personal joy we envisioned. Shortly after our marriage, we settled into a modest house on 130 Schlegelstraat, where Geert immediately set about making it our home. He expanded the living room and infused our space with warmth through vibrant colors. Though our financial beginnings were humble, requiring loans and additional work on my part teaching English, these efforts laid the groundwork for our future together.

The early years of our marriage were marked by Geert's dual pursuit of education and artistic expression. He earned a diploma in special education from Amsterdam and another in drawing and painting, illustrating his relentless drive to blend teaching with art. This period also brought Geert's first significant artistic commission—a concrete wall sculpture for a school lobby, symbolizing his burgeoning career as an artist.

Living in The Hague during these transformative years, I grew increasingly integrated into Geert's artistic life. Initially unfamiliar with the chaotic beauty of his studio, I soon found myself deeply involved, moving from a hesitant observer to an active participant in his artistic endeavors. My initial reservations about the messiness of creative work turned into a deep appreciation for the tangible chaos that often accompanies great art.

As Geert's partner and greatest supporter, I watched him grow from a talented student into a confident artist with a voice that resonated with authenticity and passion.

Each success and setback on his path not only tested but also deepened our partnership, grounding our relationship in a mutual respect for creativity and resilience. During this transformative time, our relationship grew stronger. We were partners in life and in art, collaborating on several projects that blended our creative visions. Geert's work from this period was bold and experimental, reflecting the tumultuous yet exciting times of the late 60s.

His sculptures, characterized by their dynamic forms and innovative use of materials, began to attract the attention of influential figures in the art scene.

The 100 Year Old Brick Farmhouse

In June 1971, we made a life-changing decision to leave The Hague, the bustling heart of the Netherlands. For years, we had lived in its lively streets, surrounded by art galleries, culture, and people. But the city, vibrant as it was, could no longer nurture the deeper aspirations Geert and I shared. We longed for a space where life and art could converge in harmony, where we could create not just works of beauty but a lifestyle that reflected our values.

That longing drew us to Swolgen, a small village in Limburg, a region known for its rural tranquility. It was here, far from the urban buzz, that we discovered a crumbling, 100-year-old farmhouse. To many, it would have been an eyesore—beyond redemption—but to Geert and me, it was a calling.

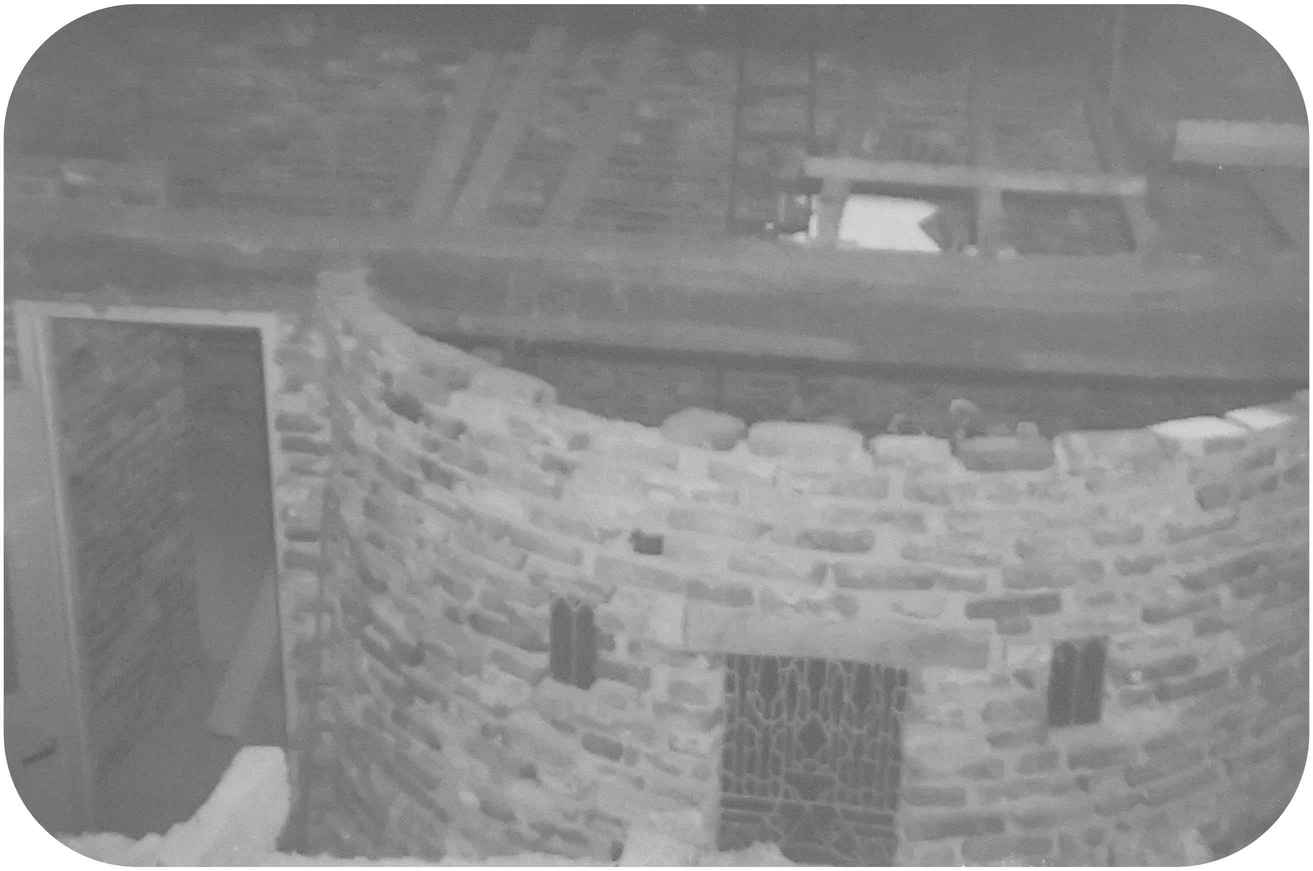
The farmhouse, standing amidst overgrown fields and forgotten gardens, bore the weight of a century. The brick structure told stories of past generations: one half had housed a family of 14 children, while the other had served as a stable for animals. By the time we found it, nature had begun to reclaim it. The roof leaked in over 25 places, mushrooms sprouted from the damp attic floor, and the barn's beams seemed ready to collapse under the strain of rot. Walls were warped, windows shattered, and every door sagged with age.

For most, it was simply uninhabitable. But Geert's eyes lit up when he saw it. He didn't just see what it was—he saw what it could become. Purchasing the farmhouse in 1971 marked the beginning of a journey that would shape our lives in unimaginable ways. With its expansive spaces and surrounding land, the property offered us not only a home but also a foundation for Geert's artistic dreams. For the first time, he would have room to work on the large-scale sculptures he envisioned, unhindered by the constraints of a city apartment. For me, it was a chance to build something tangible together—a life infused with creativity and love.

Moving into the farmhouse was an act of faith. Its condition was as bad as we had feared. The kitchen was barely functional, consisting of a sink and a few crude shelves. The bathroom was nothing more than a corner of the house walled off with bricks to keep water from flooding the rest of the space. The barn reeked of decades of animal habitation, and the attic was so damp and decayed that walking across its floor felt like a gamble. Still, we moved in, undaunted by the enormity of the task ahead. It was, after all, more than a house—it was the raw material for our dreams.

The renovation process began immediately and consumed every ounce of energy, time, and resources we could muster. The roof was stripped bare and rebuilt beam by beam. Every door and window had to be replaced. The barn was cleared out and repurposed into Geert's first studio, a space where he could finally begin to experiment with larger projects.

Nearby, what had once been a pigsty was transformed into a functional workshop, complete with a kiln. Geert, ever the builder and artist, even made his own bricks when supplies ran short, molding and firing them by hand. He approached the work not as a chore but as a creative challenge. When he heard that building a semi-circular brick wall was one of the most difficult architectural feats, he took it on simply to test himself.



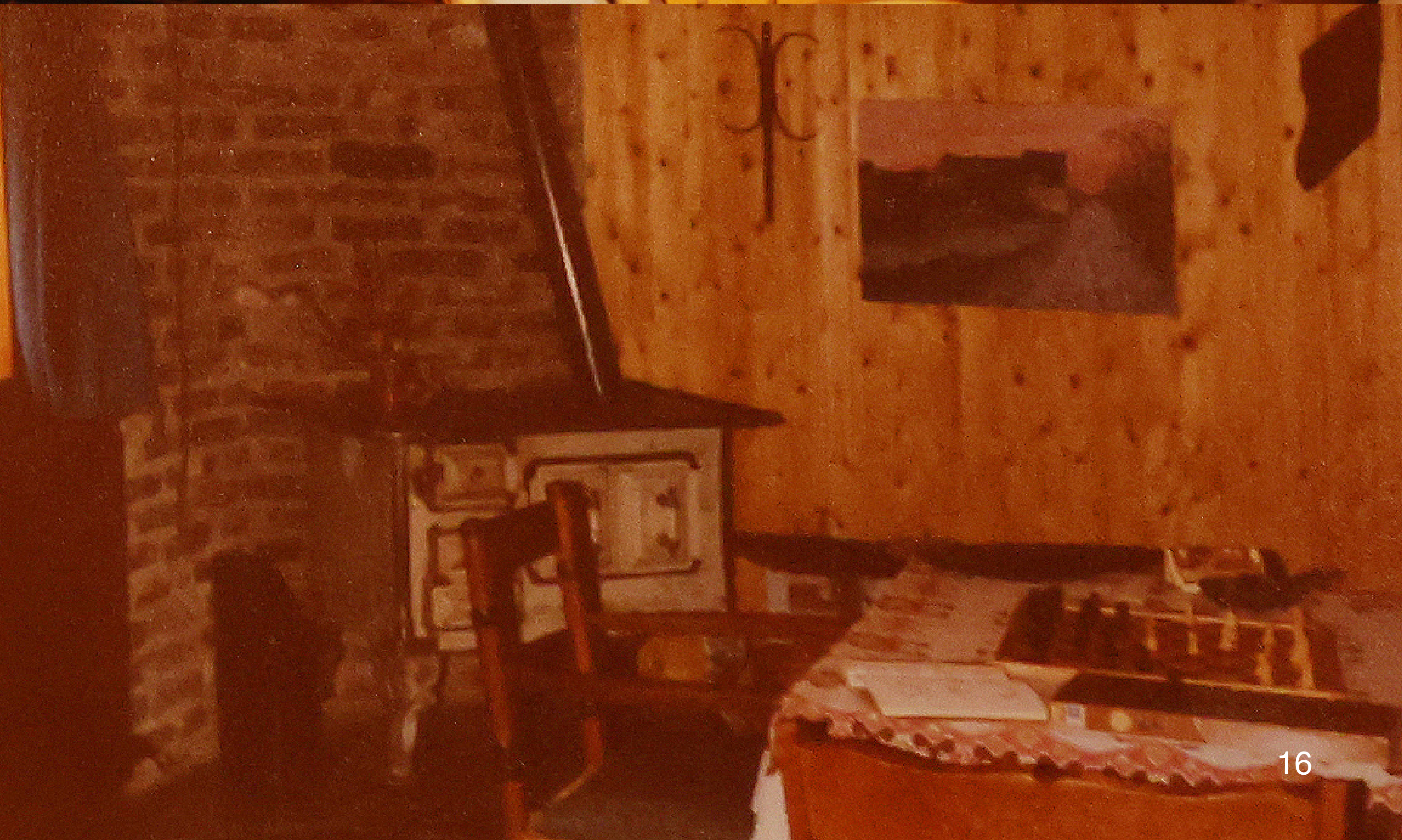
Beyond the structure, the surrounding land required just as much care. The overgrown gardens were cleared, and barren stretches were reimagined into lush, vibrant spaces. Geert planted over 3,000 trees, with help from friends, family, and even his teaching colleagues. Each tree was chosen and placed with care, creating a natural framework for what would become his first sculpture garden. The front lawn, once wild and unkempt, became a showcase for his works, with sculptures placed under the shade of trees he had planted himself.

Life in the farmhouse was a blend of challenges and triumphs. Early in the renovation, Geert suffered a serious injury when he fell through a rotten plank in the attic. The fall left him hospitalized, and for weeks I managed the house alone. It was a harrowing experience—living in a home riddled with holes, no roof, and endless tasks. Yet even in his recovery, Geert refused to slow down. He would mix concrete or lay bricks while on his knees, working through the pain to bring his vision to life.

As the renovations progressed, so did our lives. By the mid-1970s, the farmhouse was no longer just a project—it was a home. Our children—Our son, born in 1972; Our daughter, in 1974; and Sandra, in 1976—brought new joy and purpose to our lives. The chaos of construction became their playground, and the gardens their classroom. Each child had their own small plot to tend, a way to teach them the value of nurturing and creating. Watching them grow up amidst the dust and noise of renovation added a layer of meaning to everything we did.

Inside, the farmhouse began to take on new life. Walls were removed to create open, airy spaces. The kitchen, once rudimentary, was rebuilt with modern amenities—made possible by selling a portion of the surrounding land. The living room, with its high ceilings and exposed beams, became a warm, inviting space where we gathered as a family. The attic, once a damp and rotting hazard, was transformed into our first art gallery and functional rooms, including guest bedrooms and a laundry area for rainy days.

Geert’s artistic evolution during this time was profound. The natural beauty of Limburg, with its rolling hills and quiet charm, deeply influenced his work. His sculptures took on organic, rounded forms that reflected the resilience and warmth of human nature. They stood in stark contrast to the angular modernist trends of the time, offering instead a celebration of life’s enduring strength. Despite the challenges of being geographically isolated from major art markets, Geert’s reputation grew and his work found its way into private collections and exhibitions.



But the farmhouse, as much as we loved it, was not without its burdens. The extensive renovations had triggered a reassessment of the property's taxes, adding significant financial pressure. Geert's life changing injury at school had already forced him to step away from teaching—a profession he loved—to focus solely on his art. While this shift allowed his creativity to flourish, it also introduced financial instability. By the late 1970s, it became clear that we needed a fresh start. The farmhouse, for all its transformation, could no longer sustain our evolving needs.

Where Ideas for Art Came From

During the years at the farmhouse, surrounded by the lush landscapes of Limburg and the rhythm of rural life, Geert Maas found a wellspring of inspiration for his art. It was a time of deep contemplation and artistic exploration, fueled by the natural world and the people around him.

"When I think back to those days, my ideas for sculptures came mostly from observing nature and people," Geert reflects. "Nature has an inherent beauty, an organic complexity that always inspired me. But it was people, their forms, their emotions, and their stories that truly intrigued me."

Geert's work during this period was characterized by robust, rounded shapes—a stark contrast to the more linear and angular forms popular among some contemporary artists. "I always felt that round shapes had more substance, more life. They spoke of resilience and the essence of human nature," he explains.

The influence of prominent artists such as Michael Angelo, and sculptors also played a role in shaping his artistic vision, though Geert was careful to forge his own path. "I admired Henry Moore, Barbara Hepworth and Lipschitz for their unique perspectives on form and space. Their work provided inspiration but I never imitated them. It was more about understanding their approach to volume and scale, and then finding my own voice within that dialogue."

This period was also marked by reflections on the durability of art and its legacy, influenced by events far beyond the tranquility of the farmhouse. Now, when I remember for example when the World Trade Center was attacked on September 11th, 2011, and the sculptures of Giacometti there were heavily damaged. It made me think about the physical and symbolic resilience of art in the face of such destruction."

In the quiet solitude of the farmhouse, surrounded by the 3000 trees he had planted and the rural community that had embraced him, Geert's artistic philosophy continued to evolve. His sculptures, rooted in the fundamentals of nature and human engagement, began to reflect a deeper understanding of his surroundings and his own creative impulses.

"These ideas, these inspirations from both nature and the greats, helped me explore the boundaries of my own creativity. They helped me to see the world differently and to express that vision through my sculptures," Geert concludes, his gaze sweeping across the imagined landscapes of his past creations.

Selling the Farmhouse

The idea of moving to Canada emerged during a visit to my sister in Ontario in 1978. The vast landscapes, lower cost of living, and particularly the supportive community we found there contrasted starkly with our struggles back in the Netherlands. By December 1979, after much deliberation and overcoming bureaucratic hurdles—including a denied entry to Canada that was later reversed—we made the bold decision to immigrate.

As winter approached in December 1979, Geert and I faced one of the most bittersweet moments of our lives—the sale of our beloved farmhouse in Limburg. This wasn't just a home; it was a canvas where we had painted our dreams, a sanctuary where our children had played, and an art space that had blossomed under Geert's creative genius. But as our visions grew, so too did our realization that the quaint Dutch landscapes could no longer contain our expanding aspirations. Our hearts were set towards the vast, open landscapes of Canada.

The decision to sell came with heavy hearts but firm resolve. Our farmhouse, once a dilapidated structure that we had painstakingly revitalized, had transformed into a vibrant hub of art and family life. It attracted a family from Rotterdam, bursting with life and dreams as big as our own. They were a lively bunch with nine children who fell in love with the sprawling spaces and rustic charm of our farmhouse.

Negotiating the sale was an ordeal in itself. The initial offer from the Rotterdam family was far below what we expected. I remember their faces, filled with hope yet constrained by budget. It was a moment where our past negotiations echoed in my mind, and I recalled the potential buyer's details with surprising clarity. Armed with this information, our young, tenacious realtor took the initiative to pursue them further.

Chasing the deal with the tenacity of a seasoned negotiator, he managed to secure a much more favorable offer. "Seeing him drive back into our yard, you could feel the tide had turned in our favor," I recall telling Geert as we watched from our window, the children playing in the background, oblivious to the life-changing discussions taking place.
The final agreement was a whirlwind of activity. The Rotterdam family visited our home, their children's laughter filling the rooms, choosing bedrooms, and racing through the gardens, already planting roots in their new home, much like we had done years before. Watching them, I felt a surge of contentment, knowing that the legacy of creativity and warmth we built would continue under their care.

In those final days, as we packed up decades of memories and artworks, the reality of our departure began to set in. Each item we boxed was a chapter closing, and as I handed our trusty vacuum cleaner to my brother—the very one who had helped wire the farmhouse all those years ago—I felt the weight of our departure. "Take good care of it," I said, half-joking, half-serious, a small piece of our past staying behind as we ventured toward an uncertain but promising future. With the house sold and our belongings carefully packed, we prepared for the journey to a new life, our hearts heavy yet hopeful, ready to embrace the adventures that awaited in the vast landscapes of Canada.

Selling almost everything we owned but bringing Geert's unsold artworks with us, we embarked on a new journey. Our farewell from the Netherlands was marked by mixed emotions—sadness at leaving behind a life we had built with so much love and effort, and anticipation of the new opportunities awaiting us in Kelowna, British Columbia. This move was not just a physical relocation but a strategic choice to find a better environment for both our family and Geert's artistic career, which we hoped would flourish in the promising climate of the Okanagan Valley.

Moving to Canada

The days leading up to our departure were a flurry of activity and emotions. As we cleaned and cleared our home for its new occupants, every corner turned up memories—tiny handprints on windows, marks on the doorframes charting our children's growth, and echoes of laughter in the hallways. It was more than a house; it was a repository of a decade of our lives.

The morning of our departure arrived all too quickly. The house stood pristine, almost echoing in its emptiness. I remember walking through each room, whispering goodbye, feeling the textures of the walls, and the wooden beams we had exposed and polished by hand. “You’ve been good to us,” I murmured, my voice catching as I turned for one last look at the garden, now dormant under the early frost, the trees we had planted standing as silent sentinels to our family's story.

Handing over the keys to the farmhouse was a symbolic moment, heavy with the weight of finality. Our trusty realtor was there, the same young man whose tenacity had secured us a fair deal. With a firm handshake and a promise to take care of the family moving in, he offered words of encouragement for our new beginning in Canada. "You’re embarking on a great adventure," he said, his eyes reflecting a mix of admiration and melancholy.

Leaving our village was not without its hurdles. At Amsterdam Airport, amidst the bustle of travelers, our eldest, our son, met with a small accident. His excitement to explore the vast halls led him to run straight into a clear glass wall.

The sound of the impact sent a jolt through my heart. Rushing to his side, we found him more startled than hurt, with a small bump forming on his forehead. The airport staff, ever so kind, allowed him to rest in the comfort of first class for a while, where he was pampered and made to feel like a little prince.

Watching him wave at us from his temporary luxury, I couldn't help but smile through the tears—our little adventurer, already making the most of our journey.

As we boarded the plane, the reality of our move finally sank in. I glanced at Geert, who seemed lost in thought, gazing out at the runway, a mix of determination and nostalgia marking his features. Our children, sensing the significance of the moment, clung a little closer, their eyes wide with a cocktail of excitement and uncertainty.

As the aircraft engines roared to life and we lifted off, leaving behind the flat, familiar landscapes of the Netherlands, a sense of surrealism enveloped me.

We were no longer just a Dutch family; we were adventurers, pioneers about to carve out a new existence in a land so vast and different from the one we knew. The ache of leaving was sharp, but the hope for what lay ahead—a new home, new opportunities, and new stories to fill with art and love—gave us the strength to look forward, to the skies that would lead us to Canada.

Continuing from our departure, the flight to Canada was a mix of anxious anticipation and quiet reflection. The cabin of the plane felt like a small bubble, disconnected from the world yet hurtling towards a whole new chapter of our lives. Outside, the clouds formed an endless sea of soft, white peaks beneath us, while inside, our children alternately watched the skies and dozed, their young minds perhaps not fully grasping the magnitude of the change.

As parents, Geert and I shared silent glances, each filled with unspoken thoughts and questions. What would Canada hold for us? Were we prepared for the challenges of settling in a new country, with its unfamiliar customs and vast landscapes? These thoughts swirled in our minds, interspersed with the flight attendants' occasional checks and the soft hum of the engine.

The long hours of the flight gave me time to ponder our journey. I thought about the farmhouse—our first true home together, the birthplace of our children, and the canvas of our creativity. It was there that Geert's art had truly begun to flourish, where he had transformed from a teacher with a passion for sculpture to an artist with a vision that demanded expression. And as much as it pained us to leave, I knew that the confines of our beloved home and even our homeland had become too narrow for the dreams we harbored.

As we flew over the Atlantic, I recalled the countless hours of planning this move. Every detail had been meticulously discussed, from our new home’s potential layout to the neighborhoods we might consider safe and nurturing for our family. Geert had spent evenings poring over maps and articles about British Columbia, about its climate, which promised to be kinder to his health, and its vibrant art scene, which we hoped would embrace his unique sculptures.

Our conversation with friends and family about our decision to move had been met with a mix of shock and support. “Why leave everything behind?” some had asked, bewildered by our willingness to uproot so completely. But others saw the fire in Geert’s eyes, the restless energy that had been building over years of feeling constrained, not just by physical space but by a cultural atmosphere that seemed increasingly at odds with his artistic ambitions.

And now, as I watched the sun dip below the horizon, a spectacular display of orange and pink against the vast canvas of the sky, I felt a reassurance. Yes, this was right. This leap into the unknown was not just a test of our resolve but a necessary step towards fulfilling our potential, both as individuals and as a family.

The children, sensing the shift in our spirits, began to look forward with greater excitement. Their chatter about the new friends they would make and the snow they hoped to see brought smiles to our weary faces.

As a family, we had always cultivated a spirit of adventure, and now it was carrying us to new heights—literally and metaphorically.
The plane began its descent as night fell, the lights of a sprawling city twinkling below like stars brought down to earth. Canada was welcoming us with open arms, its vast expanse promising room to grow, to explore, and to create.

As we touched down, a wave of relief mixed with exhilaration washed over us. We had arrived, our journey had just begun, and the future was a canvas waiting for Geert’s touch and for our family’s next chapter to be painted upon it.

Landing in Canada marked not just a change in geography, but a rebirth of our dreams and aspirations. The cold air that greeted us upon exiting the plane was a crisp reminder of our new reality. Geert, ever the optimist, took a deep breath, looking around with a sparkle in his eyes, ready to embrace this vast country with all its promises and challenges.

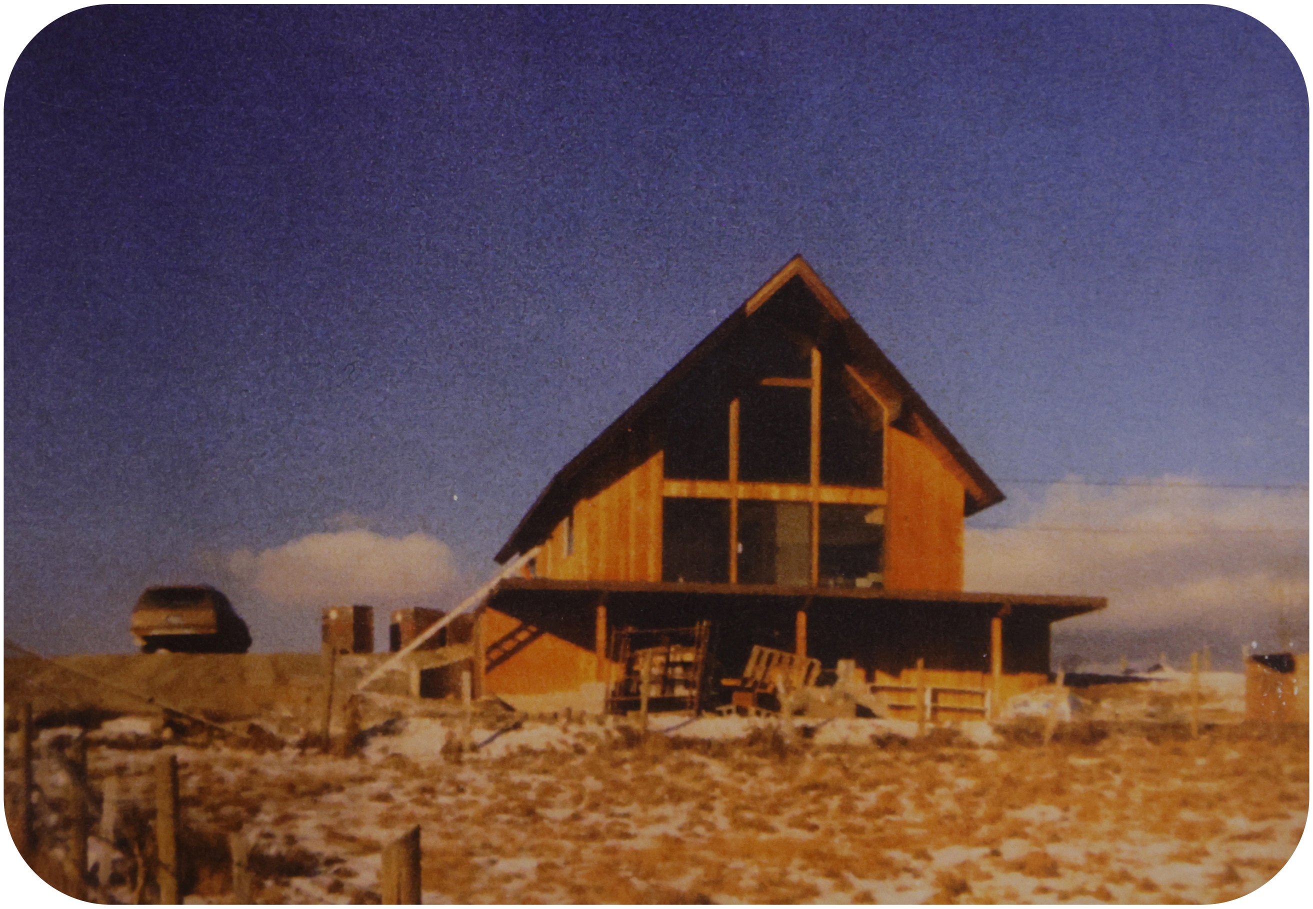
Our arrival in Kelowna was a mix of exhaustion and exhilaration. As we collected our few bags—each filled more with hope than belongings—we were met by a representative from the immigration services. Their warm welcome was a comforting balm to our tired spirits. They guided us through the initial steps of settling in, ensuring we felt supported and informed.

That first night, we stayed at a modest hotel in downtown Kelowna. The children and I, overwhelmed by the day's events, fell asleep almost immediately. Geert, however, sat up late into the night where he met Tineke while having a drink talking about what tomorrow would bring. We had appointments lined up with real estate agents, and the prospect of finding our new home was both thrilling and daunting. Tineke (Christina) and her husband became our lifelong friends and helped us tremendously.

The next few days were a whirlwind of activity. Each house we visited held the potential to be the cornerstone of our new life. Geert's artist's eye saw not just structures but potential studios and galleries where he could work and display his art. I focused on the practicalities—schools for the children, proximity to amenities, and the warmth of the neighborhoods.

Early January 1980, we had found what would become not just our new home but the future site of the Geert Maas Sculpture Gardens and Gallery.

The property, an 8.5-acre land in the Agricultural Land Reserve with access to three roads, included a partially finished cedar house and a two-story barn that sparked Geert's imagination. Despite the house being stuck in mud and unfinished both inside and out, Geert saw its potential. His vision was clear—he envisaged a vibrant artistic hub where his sculptures could be displayed amidst the natural beauty of the Okanagan landscape.



As we signed the papers, a sense of permanence began to settle in. The anxiety of uprooting our lives slowly gave way to the excitement of planting new roots.

Geert was particularly moved as we walked through our soon-to-be home, envisioning the sculptures that would one day grace the garden and the laughter of our children filling the rooms.

Our first Canadian winter was harsh but beautiful. The snow, so different from the damp cold of the Netherlands, was a novelty that delighted the children and inspired Geert’s creativity. He began to sketch again, his drawings reflecting both the starkness and the beauty of our new environment.

As spring arrived, bringing with it the promise of renewal, our family felt truly at home. Geert’s sculptures began to take shape, influenced by the landscapes and the vibrant cultural tapestry of our new community. The children, now fluent in English, were thriving, their resilience and adaptability a source of pride and joy.

Our move to Canada, born out of a desire for a wider horizon for Geert’s art and our family’s future, had tested us in many ways.

Yet, as we watched our new life unfold, each challenge faced and overcome reaffirmed our belief in the decision.

Canada was not just a refuge from the limitations we’d experienced but a canvas wide enough to capture the breadth of Geert’s talent and the depth of our family’s dreams.

This journey from the confines of a beloved farmhouse in the Netherlands to the expansive possibilities of Kelowna were not just a change of address. It was a profound transformation of our lives, a redefinition of home, and a rebirth of our dreams. As Geert often said, looking out over our new land, “Here, in this space, we are not just building a home but crafting a legacy.” The turn of the decade brought not just a new year but new beginnings for our family in Kelowna. The transition to Canadian life brought unexpected adjustments, especially for Sandra, who keenly felt the difference in school starting age compared to The Netherlands. Now, she had to wait till mid September 1980 to start kindergarten. Our son and our daughter, however, embraced the change, their young minds quickly absorbing English, a skill they practiced eagerly at school, while our home remained a bastion of our Dutch heritage.

Rick Willie, a fresh-faced carpenter, appeared in our lives much like a character from a local tale, led to us by his dog's curious wanderings. His cabin on Reynolds Road wasn't far from ours, and he soon became an indispensable part of our lives, helping Geert realize his vision for our new home.

As we settled, the previous owner of the property moved out, and we found tenants who brought life to the farm with their cows and teenagers handling the irrigation—this interaction with local farming was new to us, adding another layer to our Canadian experience.

Kelowna in 1980 was a burgeoning community of around 38,000 souls, each corner marked by a church, reflecting a mosaic of faiths and cultures. The local art scene, however, was modest, centered around a small museum and gallery that shared a building downtown. Despite its size, it was the heart of Kelowna's artistic pulse, and we were drawn to it, hopeful for what it might become. Our children, quickly adapting to their new environment, found joys in the simple pleasures of Orchard Park Shopping Centre, a place that almost became a second home as we furnished our new life from scratch.

Geert, with Rick's assistance and the occasional help from local tradespeople, transformed the inside of our house, meticulously crafting spaces not just to live but to create. City Hall became a resource for advice and permits as we added new sections to the house—an entrance, a studio, a garage, and even a sprawling sundeck that promised many sunlit mornings.

Meanwhile, Gerry and his team worked on the cedar wood staining, preserving the warmth of our home against the crisp Kelowna air.
The introduction of a mason who built two sturdy brick fireplaces became a focal point of us gathering as a family, especially during the cold snaps when the warmth was a reminder of the cozy evenings back in Limburg. The challenge of setting up Geert's studio was significant.

Sourcing equipment like a large electric kiln and materials needed for his sculptures took effort and perseverance, given our remote location.

Adjusting to the rhythms of Canadian life, our children learned to navigate their new world with a mix of school buses and lunch kits, a far cry from their walks back home for lunch in The Netherlands. Gardening presented its own set of challenges with the unyielding clay soil, a stubborn canvas for our attempts to cultivate willows and vegetables.

Our integration into the local culture deepened with family outings for fishing and camping, exploring the natural beauty of our new homeland. This connection to nature was not just recreational but inspirational for Geert, who saw in every landscape a potential for artistic interpretation.

As the house neared completion, Geert found his true calling awaited in the studio below, where the children and their friends became regular fixtures, each contributing in small ways to the artworks that began to take shape. This bustling creative workshop was not just a space for art but a classroom of life lessons imparted through the medium of sculpture.

The dream of casting in bronze finally seemed within reach. The only foundry capable of such work was Jack Harman's, nestled in the heart of downtown Vancouver. The journey there was a pilgrimage for art, a six-and-a-half-hour drive that we undertook with sculptures in wax, each trip a testament to our dedication to Geert's craft. This route, winding through Penticton and Princeton, became a road we knew well, each mile traveled a step closer to realizing Geert's artistic aspirations in our new Canadian context.
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Our arrival in Kelowna marked a new chapter in our lives. We landed in December 1979, a family of five with high hopes and a few suitcases, stepping into the crisp Canadian winter. The transition was both exhilarating and daunting. We initially stayed at a hotel, where we met Christina (Tineke), a Dutch-speaking hotel employee who, along with her husband Gerry, quickly became lifelong friends and helped us navigate our new surroundings.

The search for a permanent home was guided by our new friends and the local realtor, Olivia. We explored the region, visiting towns like Carmi, Beaverdell, Vernon, and Penticton, enjoying sunny days that contrasted sharply with the damp Dutch weather we had left behind.

This exploration was crucial in affirming our decision to settle here, where the dry climate was a relief for Geert's health and a boon for his art. Our initial days in the cedar house were challenging. The house, built four years prior, had never been completed, and significant work was needed to make it livable. Geert, ever the visionary, took charge of the renovations, drawing on our extensive experience back in the Netherlands. With the help of friends and new acquaintances, we transformed the space, ensuring that every addition and modification reflected both our aesthetic and functional needs.

As we settled into our new life, the community around us became increasingly involved. Geert's art started to gain local attention, and the sculptures he created—inspired by the natural beauty and the tranquility of our new environment—began to populate the landscape around our home.
The sculpture garden concept was gradually brought to life, with each piece carefully placed to complement the natural surroundings.

This period of settling and building in Kelowna was not just about constructing a home and studio but also about laying down roots in a community that welcomed us with open arms.

The support we received was overwhelming, and it reinforced our belief that moving to Canada was the right decision. It allowed Geert to dedicate himself fully to his art in a way that had not been possible in the constrained circumstances of the Netherlands.

Our story, from the bustling streets of The Hague to the serene fields of Swolgen, and finally to the embracing community of Kelowna, is a testament to the power of resilience, creativity, and the enduring human spirit to adapt and thrive in new settings. As we look back on the journey, each sculpture and each tree planted tells a story of transformation and new beginnings, a narrative we continue to build upon each day in our new Canadian home. This period is a testament to the resilience and creative spirit that defines our family.

As Geert's sculptures began to dot the landscape of our new home, each piece was not just an artistic expression but a marker of our settling roots. Our engagement with the local community deepened. Geert, always passionate about sharing. His love for art, opened our property as the Geert Maas Sculpture Gardens and Gallery. This quickly became more than just a space to display his work; it evolved into a cultural hub for art lovers and a place of inspiration for fellow artists and visitors alike. The gardens blossomed under Geert's careful hand, each pathway and plant carefully chosen to complement the artworks.

The transition from a new immigrant family to established members of the Kelowna community was filled with both challenges and victories.

The gallery and gardens were not just a place of business but a home where our children grew, played, and learned the value of hard work and artistic integrity. They watched their father create and their mother manage, learning lessons that would shape their own paths.

As the years passed, the Sculpture Gardens and Gallery flourished. The dry, sunny climate of the Okanagan proved ideal for both Geert’s health and his bronze sculptures. This environment, so different from the damp and cold of the Netherlands, allowed his art to thrive and preserved his works in their full glory.

Reflecting on our journey, from the struggle of renovating a dilapidated farmhouse in the Netherlands to building a successful artistic enterprise in Canada, it's clear that each step was guided by a blend of visionary artistry and pragmatic resilience.

Our life in Kelowna is a far cry from the uncertain days following our move, now filled with the joy of accomplishment and the peace of belonging.

Canada vs The Netherlands

In a reflective conversation about the cultural shifts, he experienced migrating from the Netherlands to Canada, Geert Maas shared his insights into the stark differences that defined his transition.

As an artist accustomed to the rich tapestry of European art and culture, Geert found the Canadian landscape to be a stark contrast, particularly in the public and communal appreciation of art.

"In the Netherlands, art and culture are woven into the very fabric of society. Every town, no matter how small, might boast its own public artworks or a museum," Geert explained.

This ubiquity of art creates an environment where creativity is not just encouraged but is a regular part of daily life.

The reception to his profession in Kelowna, Canada, however, was startlingly different. "When I mentioned I was a sculptor, the response was often dismissive, as if one sculptor in a city was more than enough. It was as if the community didn't see the need for more than one significant artist," he recounted, noting a particular incident where his profession was compared to that of a local sculptor; Robert Dow Reid who had created the downtown "Sails" sculpture in 1978.

This cultural sparsity was underscored by the conversations he overheard, which often centered around financial success. "It struck me that here, discussions often revolve around money —what you earn or spend," Geert observed. This was a sharp departure from European dialogues, where cultural and intellectual engagements were more valued.
Further contrasting the spatial dynamics, Geert highlighted the vastness of Canada compared to the compact nature of European countries. "In Europe, countries are so closely packed that cultural exchanges are frequent and effortless. Here, everything is spread out, and the sense of community feels diluted by the vast spaces," he explained.

This geographical spread affects not only social interactions but also the way people perceive and engage with their surroundings. "Traveling from one side of Canada to the other is an odyssey compared to the brief journeys between countries in Europe," he added, illustrating the scale that adds another layer of isolation to the cultural landscape.
Through these reflections, Geert Maas not only painted a picture of his personal and professional adjustments but also offered a poignant critique of the cultural values that differ so markedly between his European roots and his Canadian home. The dialogue underscores a profound appreciation for diversity and a critical look at what defines a community's cultural richness.

Early Canadian Life 1982-1989

1982 marked a pivotal year in Geert Maas's artistic journey in Canada, beginning with his first solo exhibition at the Public Art Gallery in Penticton, BC. The exhibition, curated by Mr. John R. Taylor, Director of the Penticton Art Gallery, ran from March 5 to 27. It showcased 15 to 20 of Geert's earliest bronze sculptures signaled his arrival on the Canadian art scene.

Elly recalls the vibrant atmosphere and the excitement that surrounded this first major showing: "The gallery was buzzing with visitors who witnessed the unique blend of classical inspiration and contemporary execution in Geert's work. It was a proud moment for us, seeing his art appreciated so far from where his journey began." The success in Penticton led to further opportunities, including the exhibition titled "Geert Maas Kelowna Bronze Sculptor" at the Kelowna Art Gallery from July 14 to August 4, 1982. These exhibitions laid the groundwork for subsequent solo shows across the region, including in Kamloops, Vernon, Prince George, and Richmond.

1982 also saw Geert stepping into a broader role within the art community. He was invited as one of three adjudicators for the "Okanagan Valley Jury Show" in Kamloops in 1983, alongside notable artists Daphne Odjig and Steve Mennie, where he contributed his insights and expertise to the evaluation of emerging local talents.

This period also brought personal joy and connections, as family from the Netherlands visited, including an aging mother and Geert's brother Henk with his wife. They were amazed by the wooden house constructions and the above-ground electricity, even in Vancouver, and it warmed our hearts to hear our children conversing in Dutch with their grandparents, keeping those family ties strong despite the distance.

1983 continued the momentum for Geert's burgeoning career in Canada with another solo exhibition, this time at the Public Art Gallery in Kamloops, BC. This exhibition further cemented his presence in the Canadian art scene, showcasing a new collection that highlighted his evolving style and mastery in sculpture.

Kamloops brought us different challenges and new audiences. The landscapes there inspired Geert, and the response to his work was incredibly affirming. It was thrilling to see more and more people connect with his vision.

The Kamloops exhibition not only attracted local art lovers but also drew attention from other regions, helping to expand Geert's reputation beyond the local community. Each piece told a story, a narrative crafted in bronze that spoke to the viewer, inviting them into Geert’s world.

This year was pivotal in solidifying Geert's artistic identity and his commitment to sharing his art with a broader audience, illustrating his journey from a newcomer in Canada to a recognized contributor to its cultural tapestry.

In 1984, Geert shared his expertise and passion for sculpture through a hands-on workshop and seminar at the "BC Festival of the Arts" in Penticton.

This event was a highlight in the local arts calendar, attracting artists and enthusiasts eager to delve into the intricacies of three-dimensional art.

Geert's participation not only underscored his commitment to the arts community but also provided a platform to showcase his mastery in sculpting techniques and his approach to art education.

Geert's workshop was a gathering of curious minds. He demonstrated the transformation of raw materials into expressive sculptures, explaining his methods and the philosophy behind each piece. Participants were particularly captivated by his ability to convey emotion through bronze, a medium that Geert not only respects for its durability but also for the dynamic expressions it can capture.

Cloverdale Paint

Parallel to his educational endeavors, Geert prepared for his solo exhibition at the Public Art Gallery in Vernon, BC. This exhibition, titled "Geert Maas From Kelowna," showcased a selection of his recent sculptures, highlighting his evolution from classical forms to more contemporary expressions.

The gallery space, filled with 7 bronzes and 12 stoneware sculptures, provided visitors with a comprehensive view of his artistic journey and his growing influence in the Canadian art scene.

The Vernon exhibition was a significant moment for us. It was deeply gratifying to see Geert's works in such a respected space, surrounded by art lovers who appreciated his unique blend of classical and modern techniques. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive, reinforcing Geert's role as a pivotal figure in the regional arts community.

These professional achievements were milestones for Geert, marking 1984 as a year of notable contributions to the arts, both through direct community engagement and through the broader impact of his exhibitions.

In November of 1984, Geert and I embarked on a 45-day adventure through Mexico with our children, transforming our holiday into an exploratory journey enriched with cultural immersion.

This excursion was meticulously planned to balance educational experiences for the children, who were assigned homework for their school sessions resuming after the Christmas break, with the exploration of diverse Mexican landscapes and communities.

Our voyage began with a conventional approach, staying in motels for the initial seven nights, easing our way into the more adventurous aspect of our journey. Our first real camping experience was at "Totonaka" near Guaymas, marking our gradual shift from tourist bystanders to active participants in the vibrant tapestry of Mexican life. From there, we drove as far south as Puerto Vallarta, experiencing the lush and varied scenery.

The pinnacle of our adventure was a ferry ride to Cabo San Lucas where we celebrated the holiday season amidst the unique backdrop of Baja California. The region presented us with unexpected challenges, including numerous "vados"—sudden, deep water crossings that were both a hazard and a thrill.

One particularly memorable incident occurred north of San Ignacio, where we found ourselves among a long line of cars halted by a flooded passage. Despite the delay, which extended several hours into the evening, the community's spirit of collaboration shone brightly as drivers banded together to assist those daring enough to cross.

Our journey took a tense turn when we encountered a fuel shortage, a common issue in the more remote parts of Mexico at the time. An old Mexican gentleman saw our distress and sold us enough airplane fuel to reach a rancho where we could refuel properly. This act of kindness was a stark reminder of the hospitality that permeates rural communities.

As we continued our journey back towards the United States, the comforts of a modern motel in San Quintin felt like a luxury after the rugged conditions we had navigated. This brief respite allowed us to gather our spirits for the final leg of our trip, culminating in an educational and culturally enriching day in Tijuana. Here, we visited the Cultural Center and indulged in local art forms at the museum, absorbing the rich artistic traditions that Mexico had to offer.

Reflecting on the journey, the experiences we gathered went beyond mere sightseeing; they wove into the fabric of our family's narrative, enriching our understanding and appreciation of a culture so vividly different from our own. This trip not only broadened our horizons but also deepened our familial bonds through shared challenges and discoveries.

In 1985, Geert's artistic endeavors reached new heights as he presented his works in two notable solo exhibitions at the Public Art Gallery in Prince George, BC, and the Public Art Gallery in Richmond, BC. These exhibitions not only showcased his latest sculptures but also solidified his reputation within the Canadian art scene, drawing attention from both the public and critical reviewers alike.

As his renown grew, so did the geographic reach of his exhibitions. This year marked the beginning of a series of national and international showcases that spanned cities such as Calgary, Ottawa, Vancouver, Toronto, and Regina, as well as countries across the globe including the U.S.A., China, Japan, Belgium, Bulgaria, Hungary, Italy, Finland, England, Scotland, Switzerland, Germany, and Portugal. Each venue offered a new audience and fresh perspectives, further enriching Geert's artistic dialogue with the global community.

The increasing interest in Geert's work also captured the attention of the media, leading to a surge in coverage that transcended previous years. Local and regional television stations began dispatching camera crews to document his creative process in the studio and cover his vibrant exhibitions. This media coverage served not only to broaden his exposure but also to educate the public on the intricacies and profound emotional resonance of sculpture as an art form.

The presence of these camera crews became a common sight, signaling a pivotal shift in how Geert's work was perceived by the wider public. Following the television coverage, CBC and other local radio stations started to feature Geert, extending his reach into the auditory realm of arts coverage.

This extensive exposure and the significant success of his exhibitions catalyzed further opportunities for Geert Maas, opening doors to a wider international stage. As his sculptures began to circulate more broadly, they captured the interest of diverse audiences and critics globally, allowing Geert to establish a profound connection with art lovers across different cultures and continents.

This period of Geert's career not only highlighted his versatility as an artist but also showcased his ability to engage with various cultural aesthetics and artistic discussions worldwide. The international exhibitions provided a platform where his unique approach to sculpture—melding classical techniques with contemporary themes—could be seen and appreciated in numerous cultural contexts, from the bustling galleries of Tokyo to the historic exhibition halls of Budapest and beyond.

The visibility gained from these exhibitions was complemented by an increase in media attention, which played a crucial role in shaping the public's perception of his work. Interviews conducted by global media outlets offered insights into his artistic philosophy and practices, further solidifying his reputation as a sculptor who could transcend geographical and cultural boundaries.

The recognition of Geert’s contributions to the art world was not limited to exhibitions and media coverage; it also led to engagements with academic and professional circles. He was invited to speak at various international forums and seminars, where he discussed his techniques, the evolution of his style, and his experiences navigating the art scene as a sculptor.

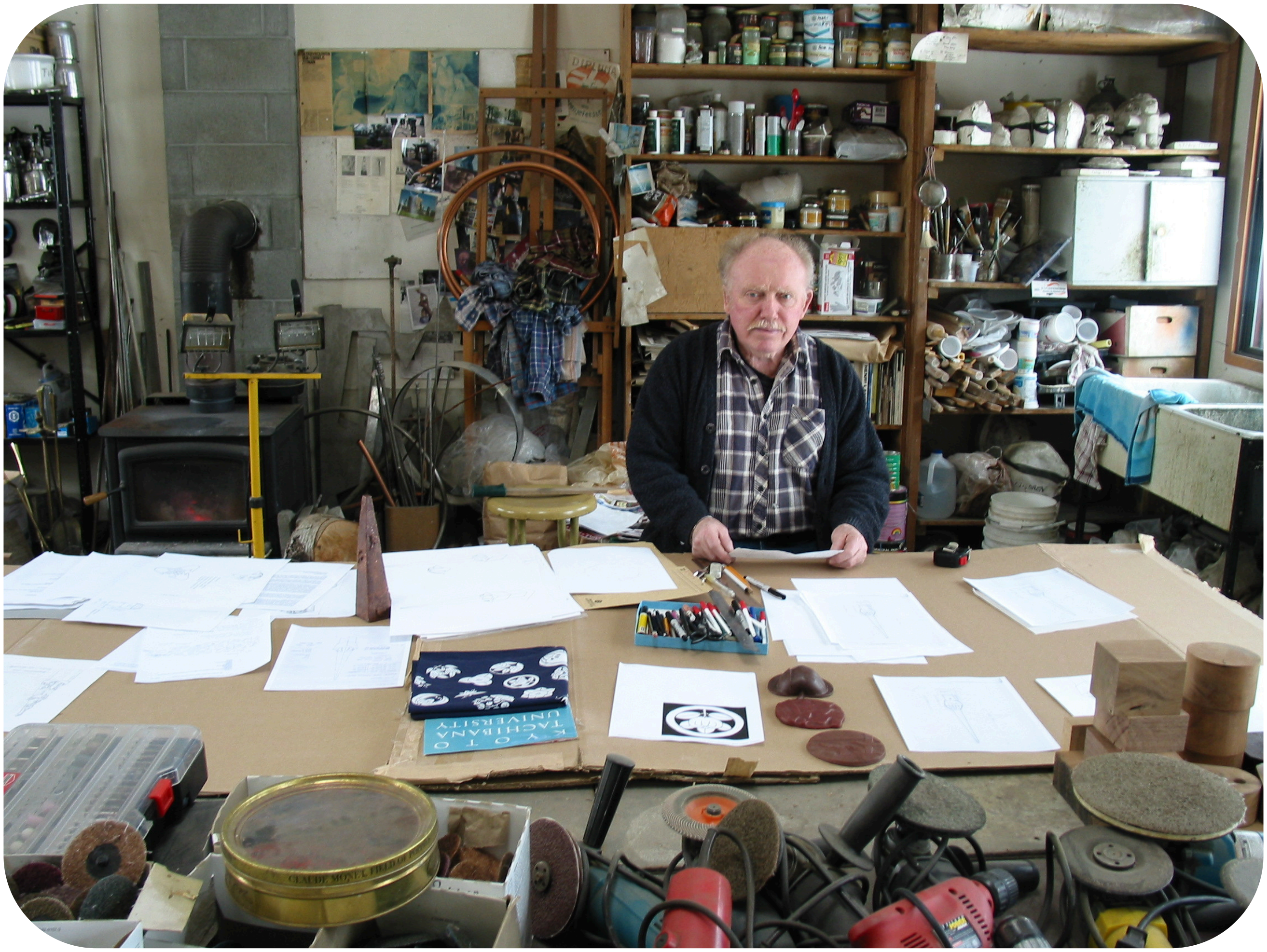
These interactions not only enriched his professional network but also allowed him to share his knowledge with aspiring artists and colleagues, fostering a sense of community and collaboration.

As 1985 drew to a close, Geert looked back on a year marked by significant artistic achievements and a deeper integration into the international art community, setting the stage for further explorations and contributions in the years to follow.

In 1986, Geert marked another significant milestone in his artistic journey, as his sculptures were featured in the exhibition “Kortárs Kanadai Kisplastika” at the Ernst Museum in Budapest, Hungary. This event was part of a larger showcase of Canadian contemporary small sculptures, highlighting artists who were bringing innovative approaches to the medium.

The Ernst Museum, known for its focus on modern and contemporary art, provided an ideal setting for Geert’s work, which resonated well with the European art community’s appreciation for nuanced and thoughtfully crafted sculptures. The exhibition allowed Geert to engage with a diverse audience, from local art enthusiasts to international critics who were intrigued by his unique blend of Canadian and European sculptural techniques.

Amidst these international accolades, Geert was also expanding his artistic infrastructure back home. A new studio with adjoining space was constructed, replacing a modest shed that had previously served his creative needs. This new studio was designed to support a larger scale of work and to accommodate the complex processes involved in sculpture making. The expansion was not just physical but also conceptual, as the new studio space allowed Geert to explore larger and more ambitious projects.



Furthermore, the transformation of his former studio and garage into indoor gallery spaces was a strategic move to create a more immersive and accessible environment for displaying his works.

This transition from functional spaces to dedicated art galleries facilitated a better interaction with visitors and art buyers, turning his working environment into a dynamic exhibition area.

These developments in 1986 and the following year were pivotal in shaping Geert’s career, providing him with the platforms and resources needed to enhance his artistic expression and visibility on both a local and international scale. In 1987, Geert continued to establish his international reputation by participating in the prestigious 7th International Small Sculpture Exhibition held at the National Museum of Hungary, located in the Műcsarnok Palace of Exhibitions in Budapest. This event gathered artists from around the globe, showcasing a diverse range of styles and techniques within the realm of small-scale sculpture. The Műcsarnok, renowned for its grand architecture and significant cultural influence, provided an impressive backdrop for Geert's works.

His participation in this exhibition not only enhanced his visibility in the European art scene but also affirmed his skill and creativity in working with small formats, a challenging and often intricate medium that demands precision and innovation.

This exhibition was particularly important for Geert as it allowed him to connect with other artists and curators, opening up further opportunities for collaboration and exchange. His sculptures, characterized by their unique blend of abstract and figurative elements, resonated well with both the public and critics, drawing attention to his ability to convey complex emotions and ideas through compact, meticulously crafted pieces.

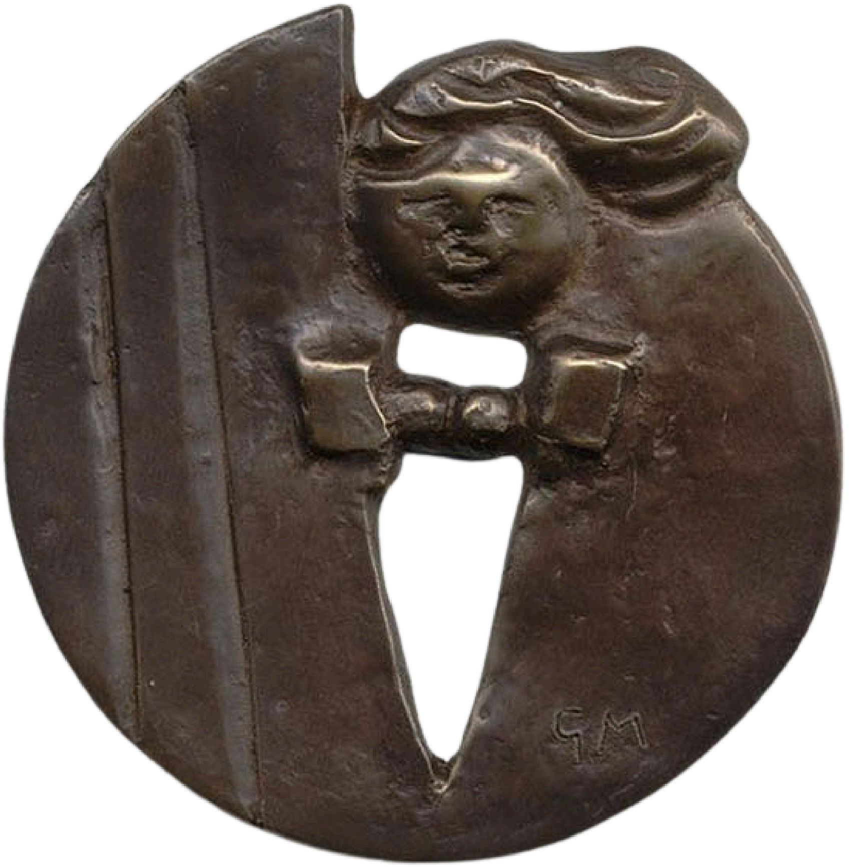
The exposure at such a high-profile venue significantly boosted Geert's profile and affirmed his place as a noteworthy sculptor on the international stage. It underscored his commitment to pursuing artistic excellence and his capacity to engage with a global audience, reinforcing his status as a prominent figure in the world of contemporary sculpture.

Geert's involvement with FIDEM further propelled his career in medal making, with his creations being displayed at prestigious venues such as the “XXII FIDEM” at the Helsinki City Art Museum (Helsingin Taidemuseo) in Helsinki, Finland. His commitment to this art form saw him representing Canada at various FIDEM congresses and exhibitions globally, including significant roles as the Canadian delegate in Germany (Weimar, 2000) and The Netherlands (The Hague, 1998).

In 1988, Geert Maas's fascination with the intricate art of medal making led to a significant expansion of his artistic repertoire. His foray into this specialized field was marked by his participation in the "VIII Biennale Internazionale Dantesca Di Ravenna" in Italy, where he first showcased his bronze medals. This event was a stepping stone into the world of medallic art, culminating in his membership with FIDEM (Fédération Internationale de la Médaille d'Art).

Beyond his exhibitions, Geert was actively involved in the medallic art community. He became one of the founding members of the Medallic Art Society of Canada (MASC), contributing to the organization of international medal exhibitions at their gallery in Kelowna. His role in the American Medallic Sculpture Association (AMSA) as a board member allowed him to influence and participate in juried exhibitions, promoting the growth and recognition of medallic sculpture in North America.

Geert's medals are not only recognized for their artistic merit but have also been acquired by numerous university collections and museums, cementing his status as a prominent figure in this niche field. His work in promoting medallic art continued with lectures, such as the one on the "Spirit of Kelowna" at the 2010 FIDEM congress in Tampere, Finland.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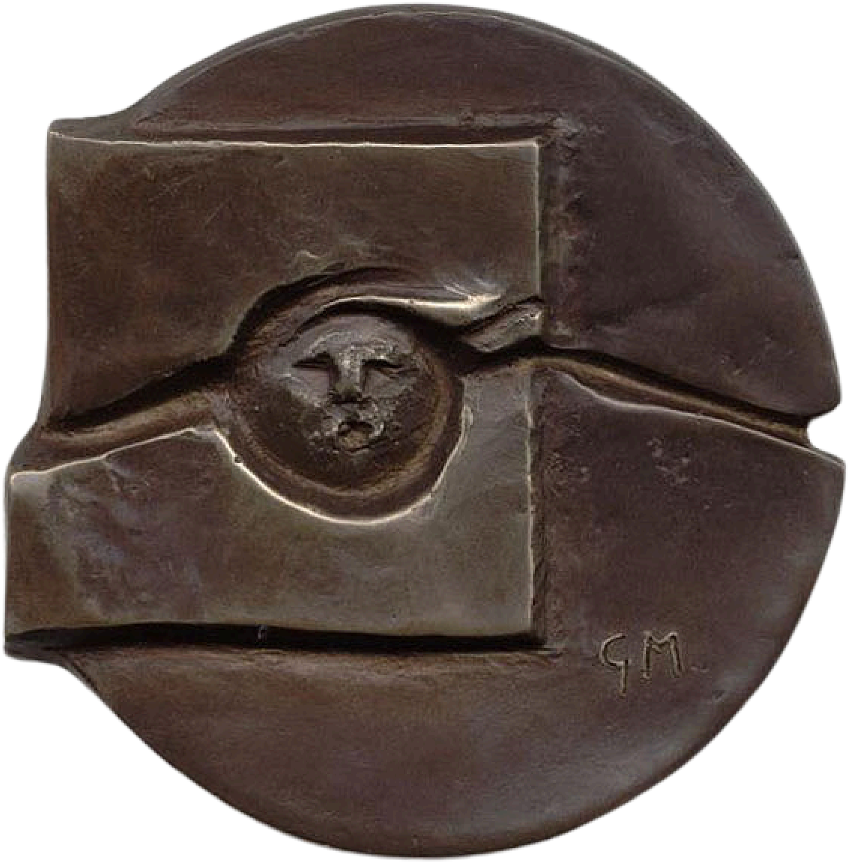
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This particular lecture highlighted the public art medallion walls in the entrance hall of Kelowna City Hall, demonstrating his dedication to integrating art into public spaces.

Through these endeavors, Geert Maas not only advanced his career but also significantly contributed to the cultural landscape, both locally in Kelowna and internationally, through his innovative works in the field of medallic art.

1989 was a pivotal year for Geert Maas, marked by significant engagement with the broader art community, both locally and internationally. During this year, he participated in "Sculpture British Columbia," a touring exhibition that showcased his work across multiple public art galleries throughout British Columbia. This exposure further cemented his reputation as a prominent sculptor within the Canadian art scene.

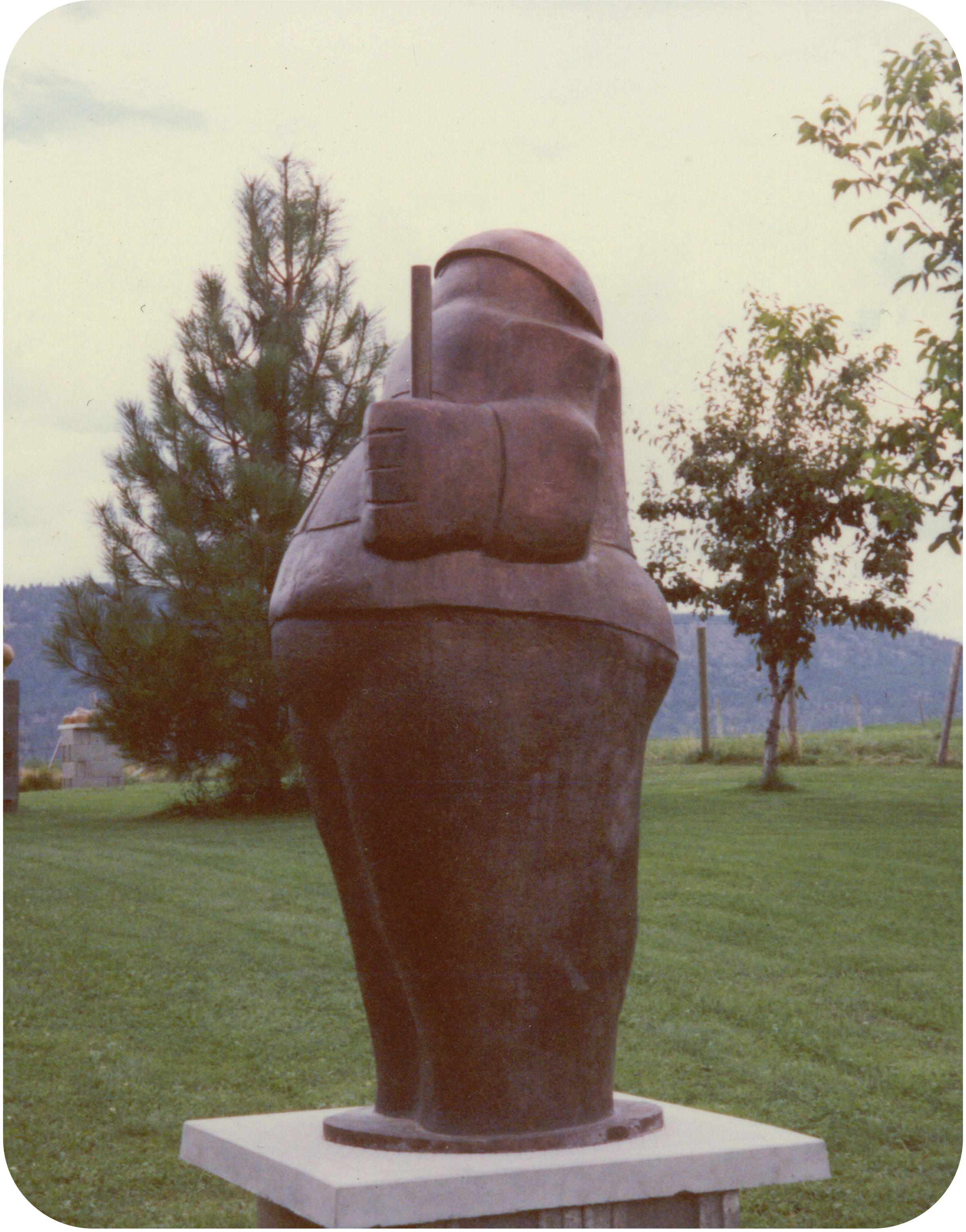
In addition to his exhibitions, Geert extended his influence through teaching. He was invited to conduct a sculpture workshop at the Brevard Art Center & Museum in Melbourne, Florida. This experience allowed him to engage with the American art community and share his expertise in sculpture. During his stay in Florida, Geert also explored dry needle point etching, creating new pieces that he later hand-coloured back at his studio in Canada. This technique added a unique layer to his diverse artistic portfolio, showcasing his versatility and willingness to experiment with different mediums.

Geert's commitment to education and cultural exchange took him even further north in 1993, where he led workshops, lectures, and seminars in Yellowknife and Inuvik during the “Great Northern Arts Festival” and the “Festival of the Midnight Sun.” These events were particularly notable as they included translation into indigenous languages, facilitated by two interpreters, underscoring the inclusive nature of these gatherings.

His engagement in these festivals provided a platform for interaction with local artists, many of whom specialized in stone carvings—a prevalent art form in the region.

An adventurous highlight of his northern experiences was a brief bush plane flight to Tuktoyaktuk, a remote area known for its traditional economic activities like trapping, whaling, sealing, reindeer herding, and handicrafts, including bone and antler carving. This visit not only enriched Geert's understanding of indigenous art forms but also connected him more deeply with the cultural heritage and artistic expressions of the Inuit community.

CHBC TV featured a special segment titled "Geert Maas and the Guard," which offered a captivating insight into Geert's creative process right in our sculpture garden. The focus was on one of his ongoing projects, a sculpture he named "The Guard." This piece, much like Geert's other works, embodies his distinctive style of creating rounded, substantial forms that convey strength and presence without appearing aggressive.



During the segment, Geert was filmed diligently shaping "The Guard," explaining the intricacies of working with clay. He shared how crucial it is to keep the clay moist, wrapping it carefully to ensure it stays workable. He discussed the initial stages of building the sculpture, starting with a wooden structure inside to support the clay, and the meticulous process of adding slabs of clay. Each connection between these slabs has to be perfect to ensure the integrity of the sculpture before it goes into the kiln.

Geert has always embraced a fluid and experimental approach to his sculptures; he often starts without a concrete plan, allowing the artwork to evolve naturally. This adaptability and spontaneity are core elements of his creative philosophy. The firing process itself is quite intricate, demanding specific temperatures and timing to achieve the desired hardness and durability of the final piece.

I was mentioned too, highlighting the collaborative nature of our art practice. It's true, I frequently assist Geert, whether it’s mixing clay or helping with the technical aspects of setting up an exhibition.

The segment not only showcased Geert's skill and thoughtful approach to sculpture but also set the stage for our upcoming exhibition "Color and Shape," where "The Guard" and several other pieces were to be displayed. It was a wonderful opportunity for the public to come and see the depth and breadth of Geert's work, to experience up close the textures and forms that he so lovingly crafts.

This feature by CHBC TV was more than just a showcase of Geert’s artistic talents; it was a testament to the dedication and passion that drive his every creation, shared with the broader community, inviting them to engage deeply with his art.

1989 was a remarkable year, one that saw Geert's creative and professional endeavors expand in multiple directions. Early in January, we introduced a guest book at the Geert Maas Sculpture Gardens and Gallery. It was our way of connecting more personally with visitors, and by the year's end, we were thrilled to see the pages filled with thoughtful notes and expressions of appreciation from those who had wandered through our artistic space.

In the same year, Geert's long-held dream of working more extensively in bronze became a local reality when Pyramid Bronze Works opened in Kelowna. This small, family-owned foundry, managed by Bill LaLonde, started casting all of Geert’s works locally. It was a significant development, allowing us more flexibility and immediacy in creating and completing sculptures.

Geert’s involvement in professional associations also deepened. He maintained memberships in several prestigious organizations, including the International Sculpture Center in the USA, the Sculptor's Society of Canada, the Sculptor’s Society of British Columbia, and the Fɛ́dɛ́ration Internationale de la Mɛ́daille. He was particularly active in the Medallic Art Society of Canada, serving as one of its founding members and a director.

His role on the board of the American Medallic Sculpture Association allowed him to influence and contribute to the broader community of sculptors across North America. His reputation continued to grow, with private art collectors in over 30 countries now owning pieces of his work. This global recognition was a testament to the unique appeal and quality of his art.

1989 also saw Geert leading a sculpture workshop at the Brevard Art Center & Museum in Melbourne, Florida, USA. This was an opportunity not just to teach but to spread his artistic philosophy and techniques to an international audience, further establishing his status as a significant figure in the sculptural world.

The Vancouver Client

It was a typical afternoon at our Maas art studio when the tranquility was punctuated by the arrival of a visitor from Vancouver. As I managed the front desk, a gentleman entered quietly, unannounced and modest in demeanor. I often greet our visitors first, to gently buffer Geert from any direct critiques that might affect his artist's sensibility.

The visitor began speaking and his initial comments seemed to unsettle Geert, who is sometimes vulnerable to offhand remarks about his work. Sensing the rising tension, I quickly steered the conversation towards our collection of sculptures, hoping to showcase the studio's highlights rather than dwell on criticism. To our surprise, the visitor's interest grew as he perused the gallery; he chose not just one, but six of our bronze sculptures. The astonishment was palpable—I recall hurrying to fetch Geert, telling him he needed to see what was unfolding.

The man's decision to pay in full right there added to our amazement. After the transaction, the visitor, now more relaxed and engaging, posed a thought-provoking question. "How come you price your work so low? They are so inexpensive," he inquired. This sparked a light-hearted dispute between Geert and me about whether it was appropriate to discuss pricing before or after a sale.

He then shared insights from his own life, revealing that his wife, also a sculptor, faced high production costs at foundries, which often matched the selling price of Geert's finished works.

This conversation made us rethink our pricing strategy, acknowledging how our self-sufficiency in handling every stage of production gave us an advantage in pricing our artwork competitively.

This encounter with the Vancouver client became a cherished story in our gallery, illustrating the unexpected lessons that often accompany daily interactions. It reminded us of the intrinsic value of our work and how our integrated approach to art production allowed for a freedom that many artists might not possess.

"Every time we price a piece now," Geert reflects with a knowing smile, "we think of that afternoon when a casual visitor helped us understand the true worth of our creations, surrounded by the familiar scent of clay and bronze." This visit didn't just offer a financial boon; it enriched our understanding of the broader implications of our work and the deep connections it fosters with those who appreciate it.

Not In The Bedroom

During a brief trip that Geert and I took, we left our gallery under the watchful care of our daughter. It was then that a charming couple—a discerning artist and her husband—wandered into our gallery, their eyes twinkling with the excitement of discovery.

Our daughter greeted them warmly, guiding them through the collection, their enthusiasm palpable as they took in each piece.

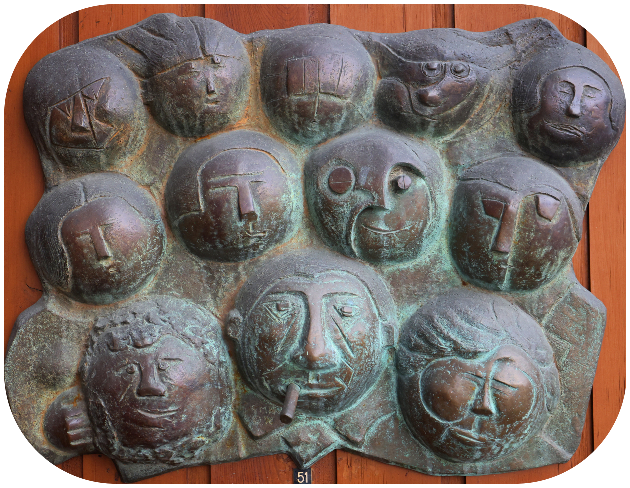
The couple was particularly captivated by a large wall sculpture, its intricate details and emotive faces drawing them in. After some contemplation, they decided to purchase it, and Our daughter, astounded by the generosity of their payment, safely tucked away the check, eager to tell us about the sale upon our return.

When Geert and I arrived back, our daughter shared the news of the significant transaction. In our gratitude, we reached out to the couple, offering to personally deliver and install the sculpture in their West Vancouver penthouse. Upon our arrival, we were warmly welcomed not only by the couple but also by a friend of theirs, who expressed his admiration for the quality and uniqueness of Geert's work, particularly surprised to find such craftsmanship in Canada.

As we discussed where to place the sculpture with many faces, I suggested the bedroom, imagining it as a serene guardian over their slumber.

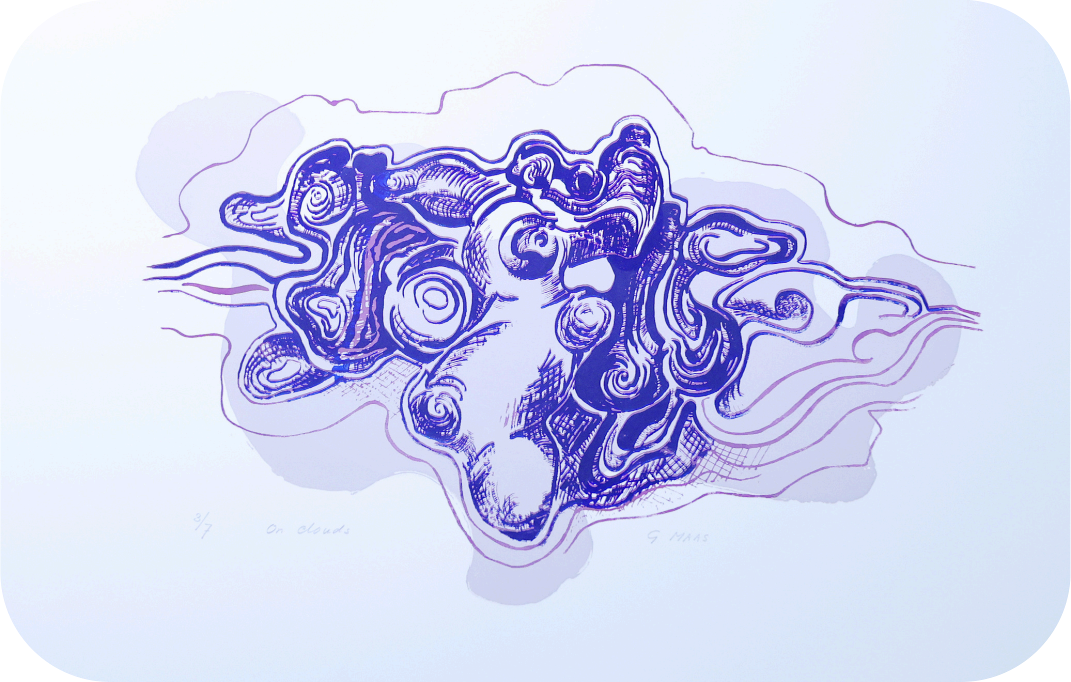
However, the wife, with a playful chuckle, swiftly dismissed the idea. "No way it’s not coming in the bedroom. All these people staring at us?" she exclaimed, her lighthearted refusal sparking laughter all around. We agreed to install the piece above the living room fireplace instead, where it would become a focal point for conversation and admiration. The installation itself was a tale of mirth and mishap. The physical exertion of mounting the sculpture, while routine for us, led to a frozen shoulder for me, adding a humorous twist to our tale. This incident became a favorite story, a reminder of the unexpected challenges and joys found in sharing our art with the world.

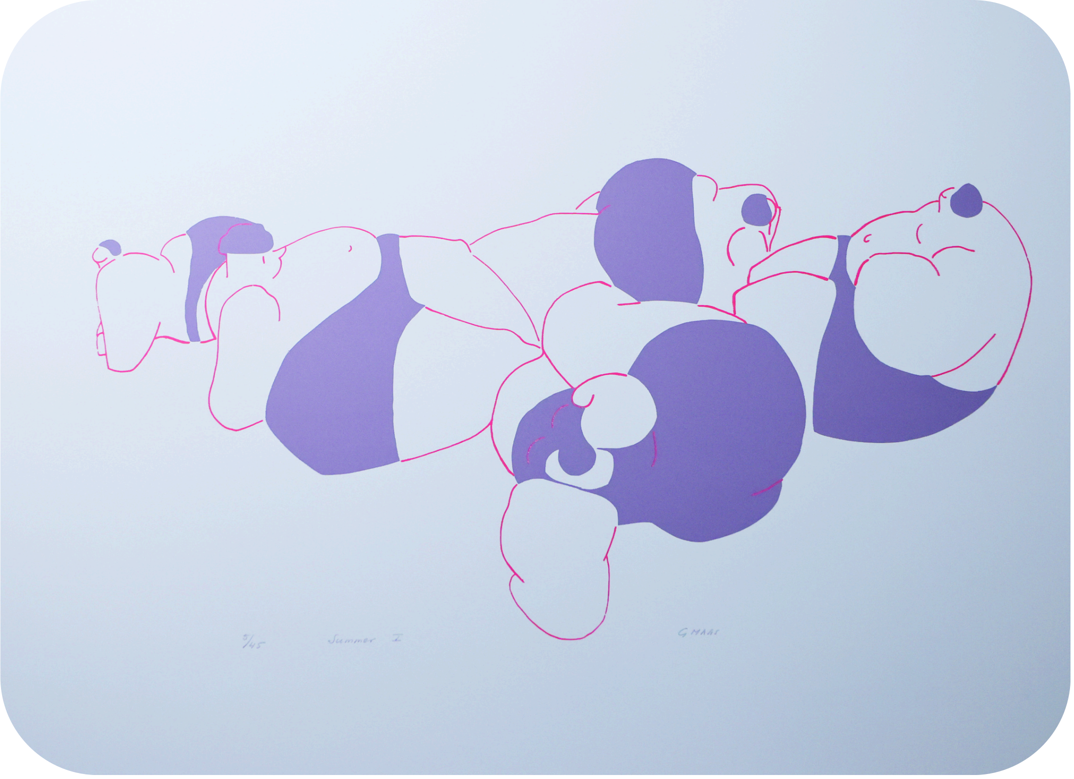
This story, fondly recalled as "Not in the Bedroom," encapsulates the essence of our experiences—how each artwork not only adorns a space but also brings laughter, conversation, and sometimes even a bit of physical comedy. It remains a beloved anecdote, reflecting the personality and life that our creations gather in their new homes.



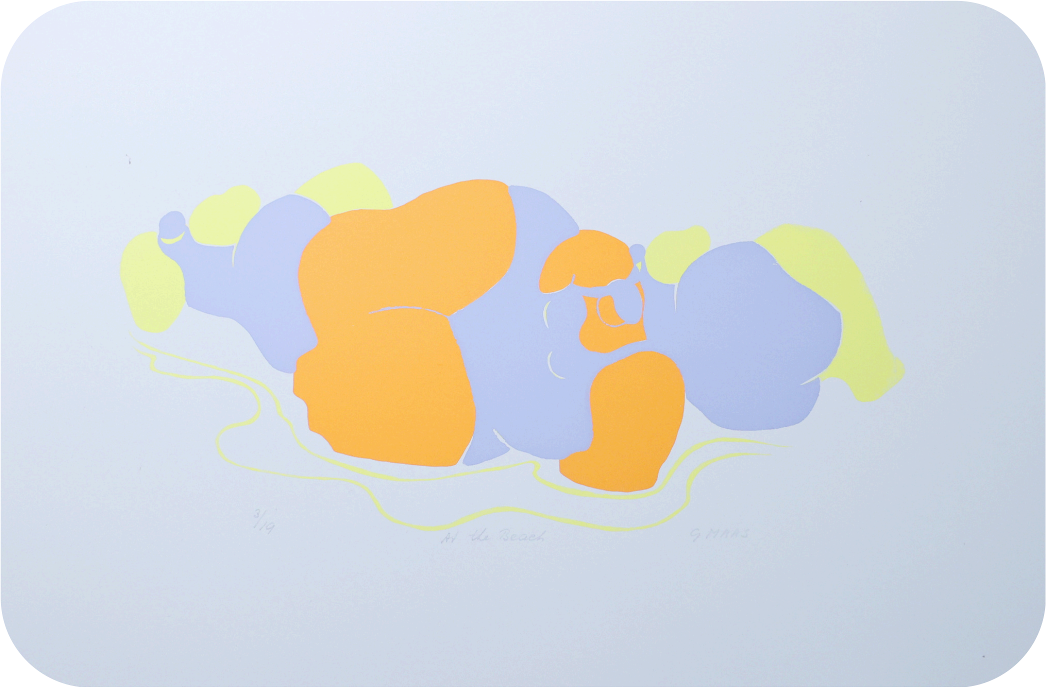
Silkscreens: Capturing Motion and Moment"

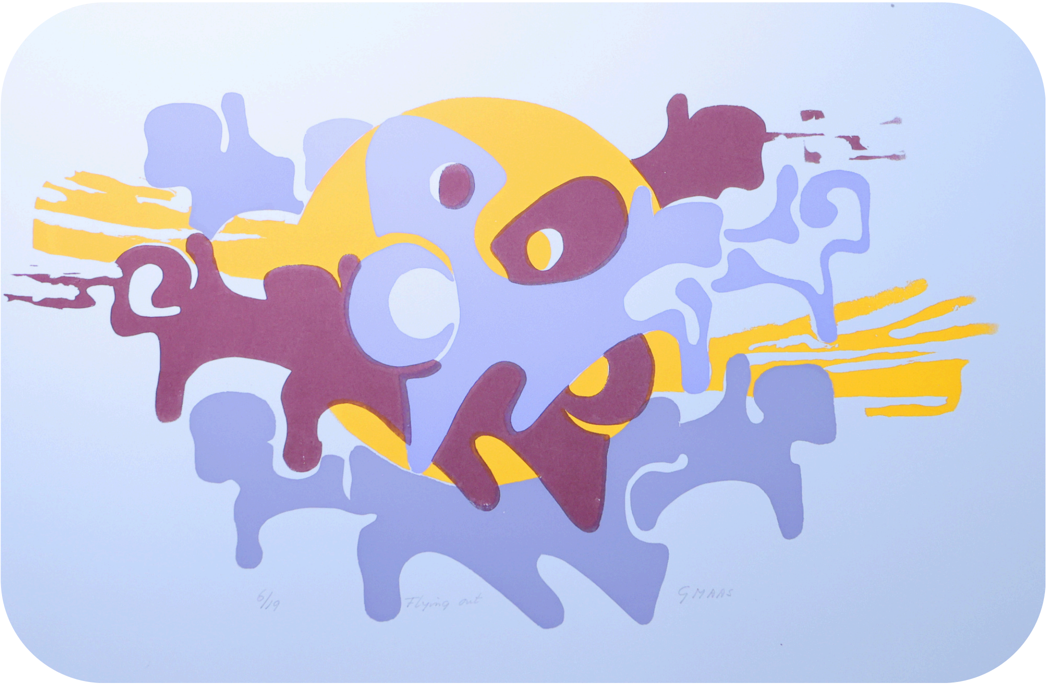
As I stood in the quiet corner of our gallery, surrounded by the vibrant silkscreen prints that Geert had created during his time at the Okanagan College facility, I felt a sense of pride swell within me. The walls were adorned with a limited series of prints, each consisting of seven unique pieces. Although they shared the same artistic vision, each was distinctively varied by subtle shifts in color and detail.



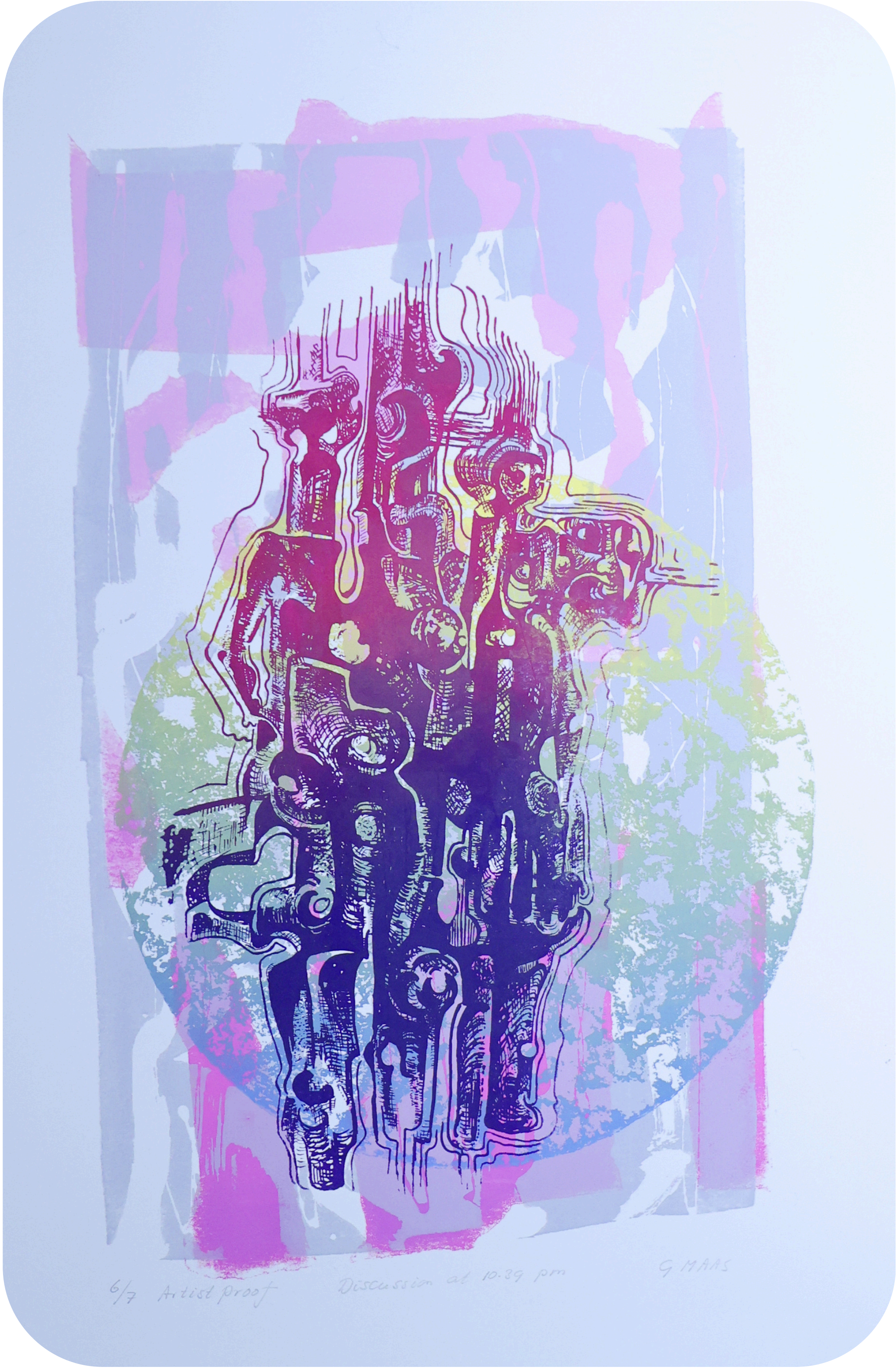


Addressing a small gathering of art enthusiasts who had come to see Geert's work, I began to explain, "These prints represent a significant period in Geert’s artistic exploration. Each of the seven silkscreens holds the same image, and the same figures, but if you look closely, the colors change slightly from one to the next, bringing a unique life and mood to each piece."


3/19
At the Beach
G MAAS


6/19
Flying out
G MAAS

I pointed to an artist's proof that hung alongside the others, noting that it too was part of the limited edition of seven. "Artist proofs are quite special," I shared, "they are a testament to Geert's hands-on approach and his meticulous attention to detail during the printmaking process."


6/7 Artist proof
Discussion at 10.39 pm
G MAAS

My gaze then shifted to a piece titled 'Discussion at 10:39 PM', another thematic exploration in limited editions, each of its seven prints transforming the constant image with different screened colors that added depth and a new narrative to the artwork.

The ‘At the Beach’ print is derived from one of the four original maquettes from the ‘On the Beach’ themed sculptures. These prints are limited to 19 editions and showcase various angles of the stoneware sculpture, capturing the fluid motion and dynamic expressions molded by Geert.

During his time at the Vrije Academy of Art in The Hague, from 1967 to 1969 Geert not only refined his techniques during his model drawing classes but also explored spray paintings. These early experiments laid the groundwork for the sophisticated techniques you see in his work today.

In 1993, Geert’s work with award sculptures gained prominence. One notable creation was the “Thespian”, a bronze award designed for Mainstage BC, an annual provincial theatre event. This award, a symbol of theatrical achievement, was crafted by Geert and mounted on wood. Over more than two decades, he produced individually hundreds of these “Thespians” for various winning categories, each year adding to the legacy of performers honored by his craftsmanship.

Moreover, the British Columbia Museums Association (BCMA) selected Geert’s maquette titled "Museums in Motion" for their awards. The first four bronze "Museums in Motion" awards, also mounted on wood, were swiftly acquired and continued to be a part of the association’s annual recognition for several years. This piece particularly resonated with the dynamic and evolving role of museums in preserving and interpreting motion, whether through historical progress, artistic movements, or the mechanics of display.

These commissions and his participation in artistic events across diverse communities underscored Geert's versatility and his ability to connect with various audiences through his art.

Each sculpture not only served as an award but also as a lasting artifact of cultural appreciation, enhancing the visibility of the recipients and the prestige of the events they commemorated.

1994 marked a year of broadened horizons for Geert Maas, as his influence and recognition extended through both national and international platforms. One significant nod to his contributions came from an unexpected quarter—the American Automobile Association (AAA).

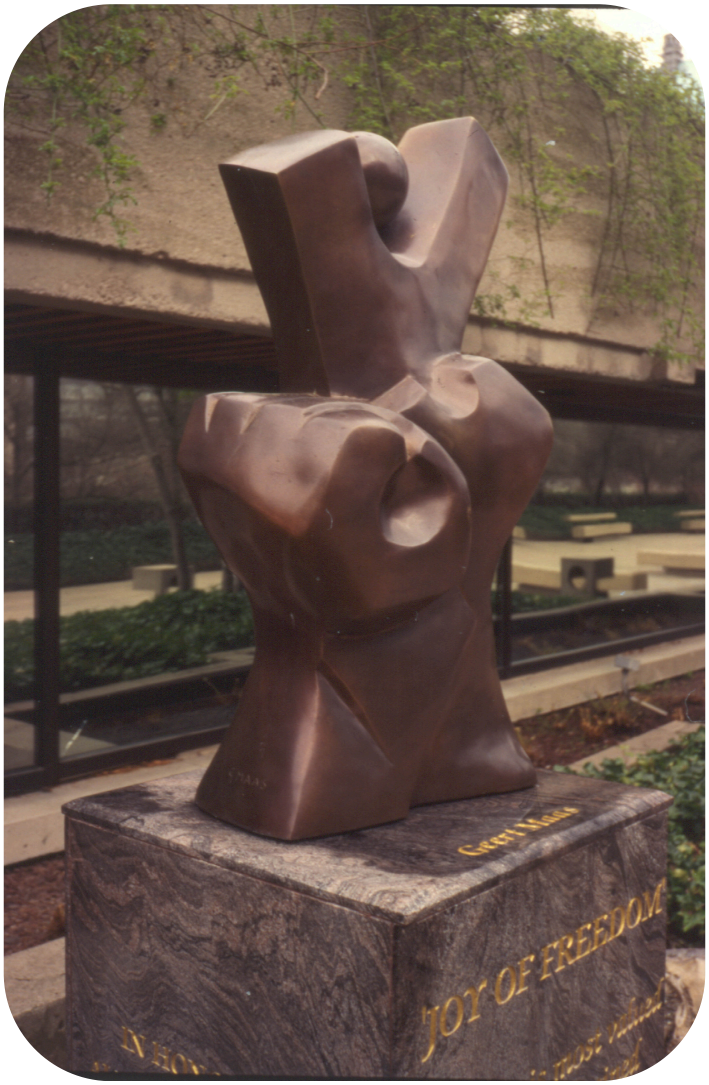
The AAA Tour book, known for recommending unique places of interest, selected our gallery for a complimentary one-inch entry. This endorsement recognized the Maas Sculpture Gardens and Gallery as a unique destination, the only one of its kind in the area, highlighting it as a must-visit location for travelers and art aficionados alike.

During this prolific year, Geert’s involvement in professional associations grew. His membership in the Sculptor’s Society of Canada and the Sculptor’s Society of British Columbia allowed him to participate in several group exhibitions that showcased Canadian talent on multiple stages.

The provincial government also acknowledged our growing appeal to tourists by placing official "Maas Sculpture Art Gardens" signs along highway 97 at Reid’s Corner, pointing travelers in both directions towards our location. This external recognition was not just a testament to the beauty and intrigue of Geert's work but also an affirmation of our efforts to create a cultural landmark. It was a period of growth and excitement, as more and more visitors made their way to experience the artistic sanctuary, we had built. One of the highlights was the "Geert Maas: Multimedia" exhibition held at the Canadian Sculpture Centre at First Canadian Place in Toronto. This solo exhibition was not only a display of his diverse artistic skills but also included a seminar Geert led for fellow members, enriching the artistic community with his knowledge and insights.

Geert's active participation didn’t stop at exhibitions. As a coordinator and participant in "ART '97" and "ART '98" at the International Contemporary Art Exhibition in Vancouver, he delivered seminars titled "Contemporary Canadian Sculpture" and "Sculpture Analysis." These forums provided platforms for Geert to delve into the nuances of contemporary sculpture practices, enhancing the understanding and appreciation of the art form among peers and the public.

In British Columbia, his leadership extended to the "Sculpture British Columbia" touring exhibit, which traveled across five public art galleries in the province. Geert not only showcased his works but also accompanied these exhibitions with seminars, bringing a deeper context to the displayed artworks.



His involvement in the "Diversity: an international exhibition of sculpture" in Washington State, USA, underscored his commitment to promoting sculpture as a dynamic and evolving art form. 1995 was a landmark year for Geert, marked by prestigious commissions and exhibitions that spanned continents and showcased his versatility as an artist. One of the most poignant moments of this year was the commissioning and unveiling of the "Joy of Freedom" monument.

This bronze sculpture was commissioned by the "Dutch Canadians Remember 1945 Society" to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the end of the Second World War, symbolizing a deep and resonant celebration of freedom. The unveiling took place on May 5th, 1995, in Queen Elizabeth Park, Vancouver, with the monument later finding a permanent home in a prominent location downtown at Robson Square near the law courts. This event was particularly special as Geert’s brother Henk and his wife traveled from The Netherlands to join the celebration, making it a memorable family gathering.

In the same year, Geert’s artistic prowess was displayed across North America and even reached Japan, showcasing his broad appeal and international recognition. His multimedia exhibitions, titled "Geert Maas: Multimedia," were held at the Devonian Gardens in Calgary and the Canadian Sculpture Centre at First Canadian Place in Toronto. These exhibitions allowed audiences to experience the breadth of Geert’s work, including sculptures, multimedia installations, and his unique approach to artmaking.

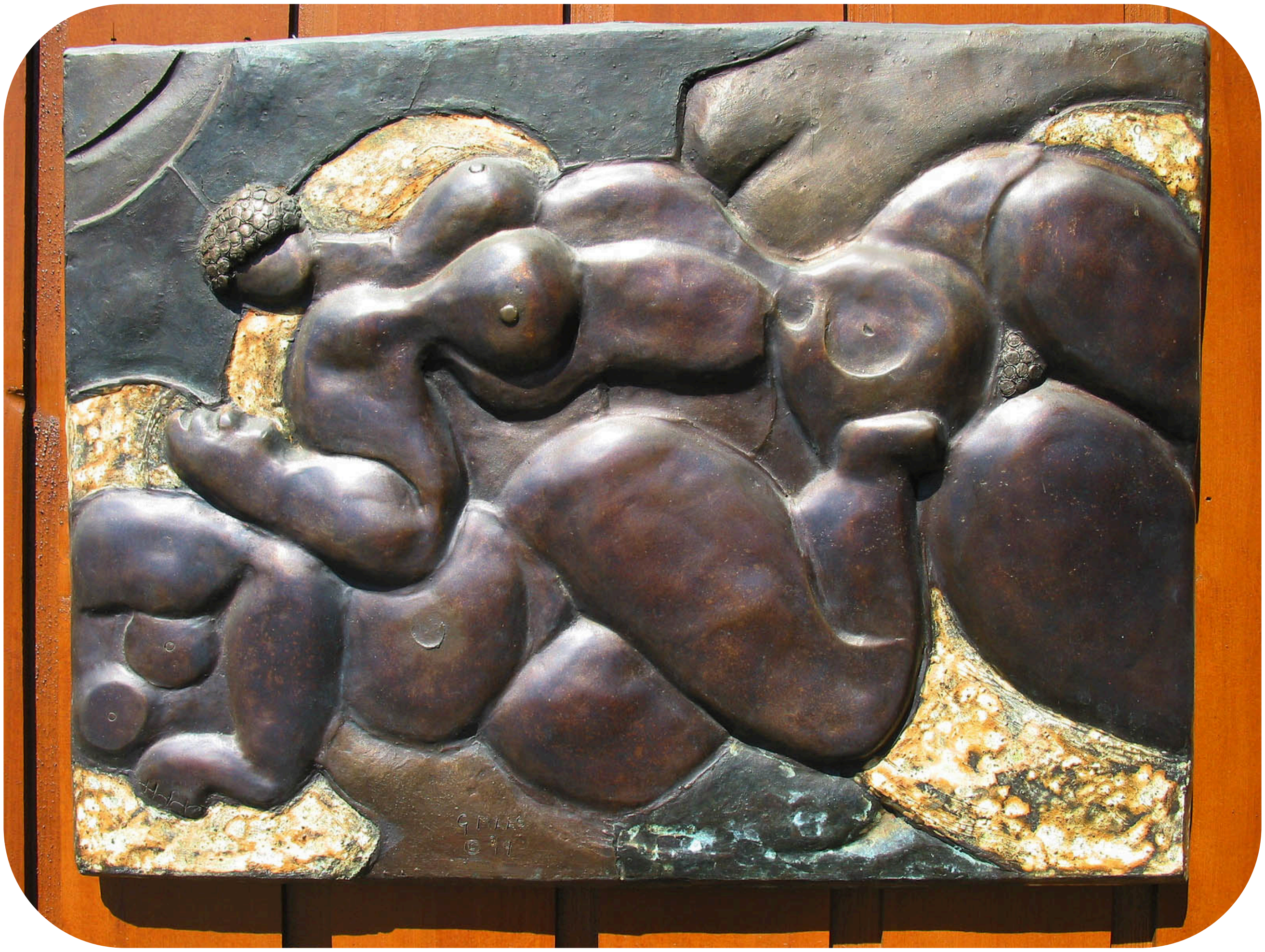
Adding to his international credentials, Geert presented "Geert Maas: Explorations" at City Hall in Kasugai, Japan. This exhibition was a testament to his global reach and the universal language of his art, which transcends cultural boundaries. It provided an opportunity for Japanese audiences to engage with his innovative techniques and the thematic explorations that characterize his sculptures.

Each exhibition and commission built upon his reputation as an artist capable of conveying profound messages through his work, enriching the cultural fabric of every community fortunate enough to host his creations.

In 1996, Geert Maas's vibrant and distinctive style took center stage at the Art Walk, held at Holiday Park Resort in Lake Country. Selected by art collector Jody LaFontaine as the featured artist for the event, Geert's impact was immediate and unforgettable, particularly through the promotion of his "Sunbathers" wall sculpture. This artwork, known for its bold use of color and daring imagery, was chosen to adorn posters and T-shirts, creating a vivid visual symbol for the festival.

In addition to the ceramic version, Geert crafted a limited edition of the "Sunbathers" in bronze, offering collectors a chance to own a piece of his celebrated art in a more enduring medium.

This not only diversified the ways in which his art could be appreciated but also cemented his status as a versatile artist capable of mastering different materials.

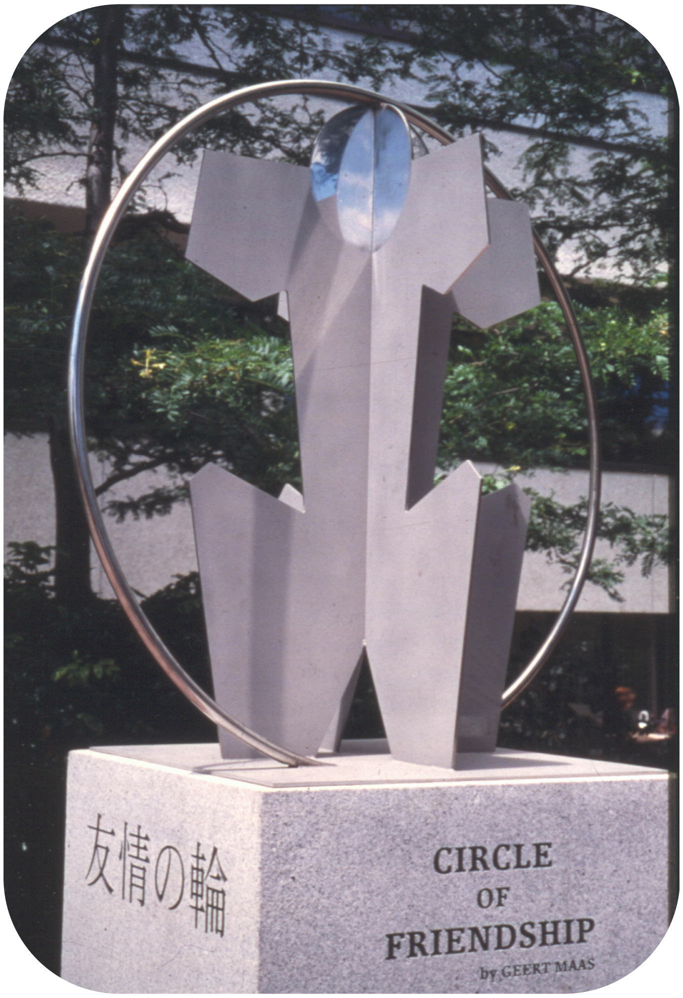


The 1996 Art Walk thus served as a significant platform for Geert, showcasing his ability to engage and challenge his audience, while his "Sunbathers" sculpture remained a memorable highlight of the event, leaving a lasting impression on all who attended.

'Circle of Friendship' monument

I have the privilege of introducing you to the 'Circle of Friendship' monument, a stunning stainless steel sculpture situated at the entrance to the Kasugai Gardens, just behind Kelowna City Hall. For many years, Kasugai, a city in Japan, has been the sister city of Kelowna. The Kasugai Gardens, co-designed by both cities, provide a serene and beautiful space for relaxation and reflection, symbolizing the deep bond between these two communities.

In 1987, the tranquil Kasugai Gardens were completed in Kelowna to celebrate the friendship between our cities. The 'Circle of Friendship' monument was later added to honor Yukihisa 'Roy' Tanaka, a pivotal figure in fostering cultural exchanges between Canada and Japan, following his sudden death in 1996.



The sculpture was designed by Geert Maas as a lasting tribute to Mr. Tanaka's dedication to the Kasugai Gardens and his exceptional service to international friendship. The design features sleek stainless steel, reflecting the enduring and reflective qualities of Mr. Tanaka's contributions.

The monument was unveiled in January 1997 in the presence of the mayors of Kasugai and Kelowna, along with the Tanaka family, marking a poignant moment of remembrance and celebration. Its unveiling served not only as a memorial but also as a reaffirmation of the bonds between our cities.

A corresponding 'Circle of Friendship' sculpture was also installed in Kasugai, Japan. Created here in Kelowna and shipped to Kasugai, it was unveiled during the city's annual festival in October 2018, witnessed by Mr. Herbert Tanaka and his family, thus mirroring the connection across continents.

友情の輪
Circle of Friendship

1997 BCTV feature

I want to share a delightful moment from 1997 that brought Geert's sculpture garden into the limelight. During a special BCTV broadcast titled "BC Tour Day Six," viewers were offered a quick yet captivating look at the creative solution Geert devised to address his studio space constraints.

The feature, though only 30 seconds long, perfectly encapsulated the essence of Geert's prolific nature as an artist. It began with a view of the sprawling garden where some of Geert's larger sculptures are displayed. This innovative outdoor gallery was born from necessity, as Geert's studio brimmed over with his creations, each piece a testament to his endless creativity and passion for sculptural art.

The segment highlighted the sculpture garden not just as an extension of the studio, but as a vital part of our artistic expression and public engagement.

The visiting director from BCTV expressed genuine admiration for the way the garden enhances the cultural landscape of Kelowna, echoing the sentiments of many who visit.

This brief feature on BCTV might have been short, but its impact was significant. It showcased Geert's unique approach to art and space management, leaving a memorable impression on viewers and further solidifying the sculpture garden's role as a cultural landmark.

We cherish this piece of our history, as it reflects the broader appreciation for the arts that we strive to foster here in Kelowna. Thank you for taking the time to remember this moment with us, and we hope to welcome you soon to experience the beauty and inspiration of Geert Maas's sculpture garden in person.

1998 Art International New York

In 1998, Geert was invited to showcase his work at the prestigious Art International New York, held at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center. This event marked an exhilarating expansion of his artistic influence to an international audience.

The exhibition at Art International New York is one of the most significant events in the art world, drawing artists, collectors, and galleries from around the globe. For Geert, being part of such a renowned showcase was both an honor and a profound responsibility. It was an opportunity to present his unique vision and craftsmanship to a diverse and discerning crowd.

As we prepared for the event, the excitement was palpable. Geert selected a variety of his works that best represented his artistic journey and innovation. The pieces chosen included a mix of his renowned bronze sculptures and a few of his dynamic medallic artworks, which had already garnered him recognition in several international circles.

Upon arrival at the Javits Center, the scale of the venue and the caliber of the participating artists were awe-inspiring. Geert's works were displayed in a prime location, where they attracted the attention of many visitors who were intrigued by his unique style and the emotive power of his sculptures.

The feedback from viewers was overwhelmingly positive, with many expressing admiration for the creativity and depth of his work.

One of the most rewarding aspects of this experience was the interaction with fellow artists and art lovers from various parts of the world. These conversations not only broadened our perspectives but also affirmed the universal appeal of Geert's art. It was a reaffirming moment that his works could resonate so deeply with an international audience.

Participating in Art International New York was a defining moment for Geert, enhancing his reputation and opening doors to new opportunities and collaborations. The exposure and connections made during the event continue to influence his artistic endeavors to this day.

Reflecting on this remarkable chapter of our journey, we are reminded of the power of art to connect across cultures and boundaries.

Passion and Vision

As the autumn leaves began to paint the city of Kelowna in hues of amber and gold, the Kelowna Art Gallery opened its doors to a retrospective that was close to my heart—Passion and Vision: The Work of Geert Maas. From September 4th to October 17th, 1999, this exhibition celebrated not only the culmination of two decades of tireless creativity by my husband, Geert, but also his indelible mark on the fabric of the international and local art communities.

Walking into the gallery, I was immediately enveloped by the profound scope of Geert's artistic endeavors. The space was transformed into a living chronicle of his career, with each artwork narrating a chapter of his life's journey. The exhibition showcased an impressive array—from his vibrant and tactile sculptures in bronze to his dynamic and thoughtful paintings, each piece echoed Geert's mastery and his diverse artistic expressions.

Among the works displayed, the bronze sculptures stood out with their intricate details and life-sized presence. Pieces like On the Beach, a group sculpture featuring five bronze figures, each cast with a unique patina, illustrated Geert's skill in capturing human emotions and interactions.

Another notable work, Ancestry, presented in bronze, showcased his ability to infuse historical and personal narratives into his art, making them resonate with viewers on a profound level.

Adjacent to these powerful sculptures, the gallery walls were adorned with Geert's paintings—canvases that pulsed with the same energy and passion as his three-dimensional works. The Metropolis series, acrylic and lacquer on canvas, depicted urban landscapes with a complexity of form and a richness of texture that pulled the viewer into a reflective dialogue about modernity and isolation.

The exhibition was enriched with a narrative wall and a series of video interviews, which I found particularly moving. These multimedia elements provided insights into Geert's philosophy, his creative process, and his reflections on life as an artist. It was an educational journey that allowed visitors to delve deeper into the essence of his work and the motivations behind his enduring drive to create.

Curated by Gayle E. Liman, whom Geert had chosen for her keen understanding of his vision, the exhibition was a well-rounded portrayal of his oeuvre.

The essays included in the exhibition catalog by artist and art professor Gary Pearson and Drs. Marcel Teunissen, an art historian from The Hague added layers of interpretation and appreciation, highlighting the significance of Geert's contributions to contemporary art.

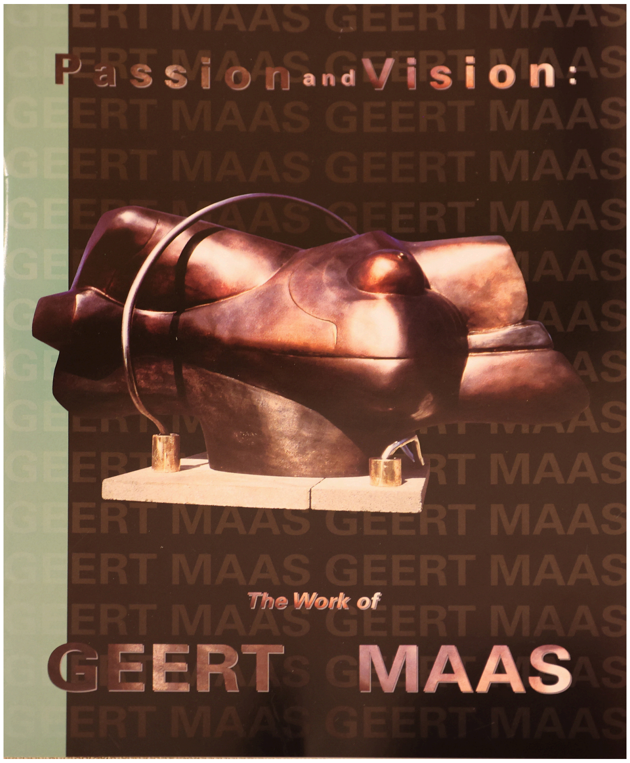
Gary Pearson remarked on the "pluralistic installation" that "amply demonstrates the complexity and breadth of Geert's creative enterprise," celebrating his "eclecticism and continual experimentation with materials."

Drs. Marcel Teunissen admired the way the exhibition allowed visitors to "experience the evolution of an artist's body of work," and to reflect on what drives an artist like Geert to create.

Geert himself, ever humble yet passionate, shared during a gallery talk, "I am happiest when I am creating. It is such a part of my life that I don’t question it. I am compelled to work and when I am enticed by a new medium or form, I let it consume me." His words echoed around the gallery, inspiring attendees and bringing a deeper understanding of the force that drives his continuous exploration in art.

The response to the exhibition was overwhelming. Artists, critics, and art lovers praised Geert’s versatility and his commitment to exploring and pushing the boundaries of each medium he worked with. For many, the exhibition was a revelation of Geert’s breadth of talent and his profound impact on the art world.

For me, watching others experience Geert’s work was deeply gratifying. Each day of the exhibition brought new admirers and renewed accolades. It was a celebration of a life dedicated to art—a life I have had the privilege of sharing. Standing in the gallery, surrounded by the works that represented decades of dedication and passion, I felt an immense pride in Geert’s achievements and a heartfelt gratitude for the journey we embarked on together in this world of art.



Passion and Vision was not just an exhibition; it was a testament to Geert’s enduring legacy and a beacon for the future of art. As we look forward to more creative years, this retrospective will remain a pivotal point in our lives, reminding us of the power of art to inspire, connect, and transcend.

New Millennium Expansion

I want to share with you an exhilarating chapter from the year 2000—a landmark year in Geert's career that celebrated his vision and the formal incorporation of the Geert Maas Sculpture Gardens and Gallery.

The year began with a significant honor for Geert, as he was invited to hold two simultaneous solo exhibitions at Simon Fraser University, spanning their Art Galleries in Burnaby and West Hastings, Vancouver. These exhibitions not only showcased a comprehensive collection of his works but also offered Geert a platform to share his insights into the art world through a special lecture titled, "How independence, diversity, and quality in art contribute to optimism."

This lecture provided a profound exploration of how art can influence and uplift society, drawing from Geert's own experiences as an independent artist. He discussed the importance of maintaining artistic freedom, the value of cultural diversity in artistic expressions, and how the pursuit of quality in art-making contributes to a more optimistic and vibrant society. Attendees included students, faculty, artists, and art lovers, all captivated by Geert's perspective and his ability to intertwine his artistic journey with broader cultural themes.

In addition to this educational milestone, February 8, 2000, marked a pivotal moment for our ongoing legacy—the incorporation of the Geert Maas Sculpture Gardens and Gallery. This formalization was documented by Thomas P. Fellhauer at Pushor Mitchell Lawyers in Kelowna, with KPMG continuing as our accounting firm.

This incorporation solidified our commitment to promoting and preserving the arts within our community and beyond, ensuring the stability and continued growth of the gallery and gardens that so many have come to love.

This year was a testament to Geert's enduring impact on the art world and his unwavering commitment to fostering an environment where art is accessible and appreciated in its many forms. It was a year of celebration, recognition, and reaffirmation of our mission to share the beauty and power of art with everyone.

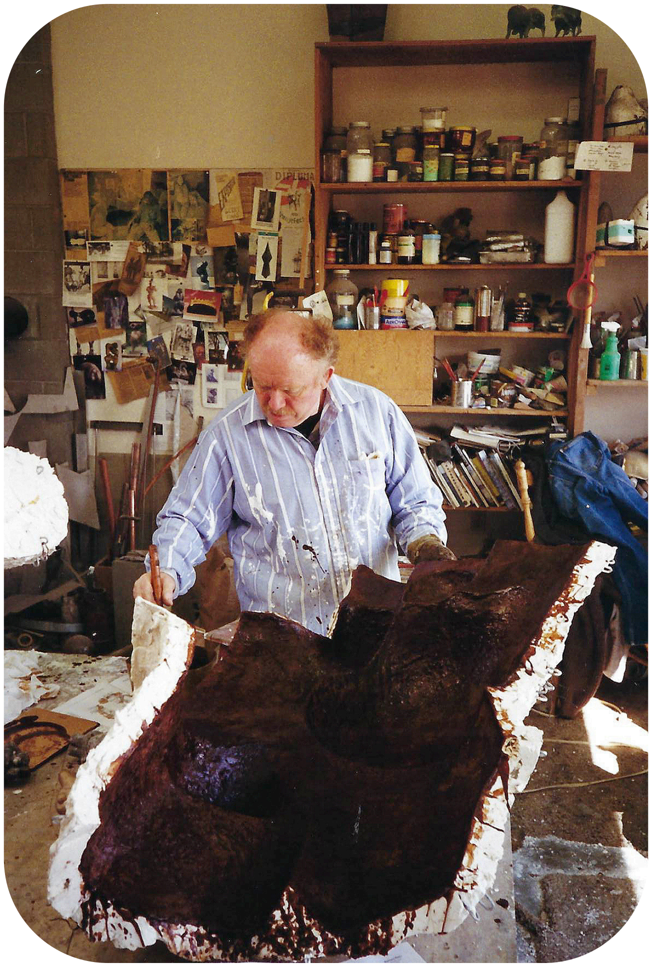
The year 2000 finished with the installation of the commissioned “Aesculapius” bronze sculpture on December 8th. It is located at the Osoyoos Medical Center, 7802 Spartan Drive corner 78th Avenue. The area is known for the dessert and many rattle snakes.

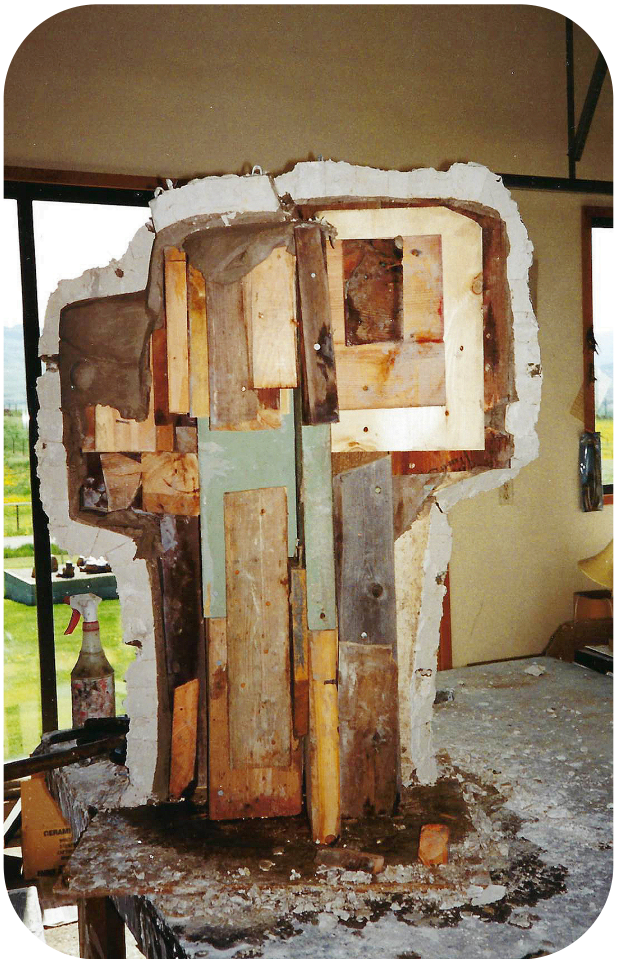
2000 Ancestry

I'd like to share insights into the powerful inspirations behind one of Geert's most profound works, showcased in the documentary segment "Ancestry - A Profile of Geert Maas."

This piece delves deep into the personal and emotional landscape that shapes his creative expression, particularly through the sculpture titled "Ancestry."

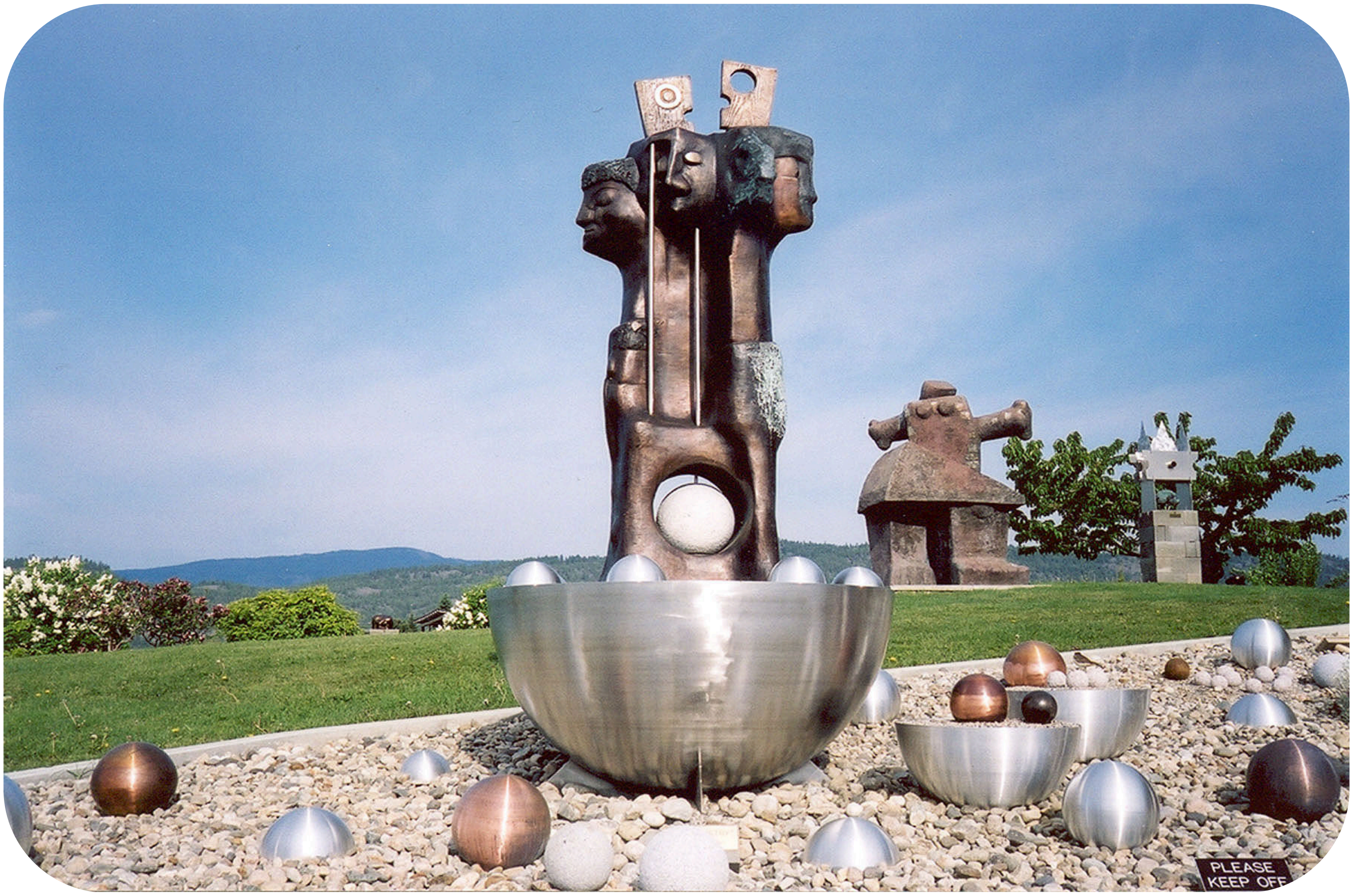
The creation of "Ancestry" was significantly influenced by the period following the passing of Geert's mother. This loss propelled him into a reflective journey, pondering the depths of his family lineage and the myriad untold stories of his ancestors. It was this introspection that gave birth to "Ancestry," a sculpture that seeks to connect the physical with the metaphysical, intertwining Geert's personal history with the universal themes of heritage and legacy.





In the documentary, Geert discusses the meticulous process involved in bringing his vision to life—from the initial concept sketches to the final execution in various materials like clay, bronze, and stone. Each step in the creation of "Ancestry" is not just about crafting a physical object but is also an exploration of the philosophical questions it raises: How are we shaped by the generations that precede us? What does it mean to connect with our roots through art?

"Ancestry" is more than just a sculpture; it's a portal to engage with these existential musings, inviting viewers to reflect on their own lineage and the echoes of the past that shape their present and future. The documentary highlights how Geert's sculpture garden, while a personal sanctuary for creativity, is also a vibrant space for community engagement and contemplation. It serves as a venue where art and audience meet, allowing for a shared experience of reflection and discovery.



This feature on Geert's work not only enriches our understanding of his artistic journey but also emphasizes the profound emotional and historical dimensions that his sculptures embody. We invite you to visit the Geert Maas Sculpture Gardens and Gallery, whether in person or online, to experience "Ancestry" and other works that encapsulate the spirit of exploration and connection. Here, amidst the scent of bronze and the whispers of the past, you'll find stories woven in metal and stone, waiting to resonate with your own.

People of Vision CHBC TV

I'm excited to introduce you to a special feature on CHBC TV titled "Geert Maas International Artist - People of Vision." This segment offers a profound look into Geert's world, filmed during a major retrospective exhibition that showcased 85 of his works, highlighting his unwavering commitment to the art of sculpture.

In his studio, surrounded by the palpable creativity of his life's work, Geert shares his passion for the rounded, pure forms that characterize his sculptures, primarily crafted in bronze. He explained that these pieces, created in the solitude of his studio, represent his dedication to an art form that involves complex, time-intensive techniques. Bronze casting, a method steeped in history and largely unchanged over millennia, is discussed in detail, illustrating Geert's deep respect for traditional processes alongside his innovative spirit.

Throughout the feature, Geert emphasized the importance of making art accessible, explaining why, despite having his own gallery and sculpture garden, he continues to exhibit in public galleries. This outreach is crucial to him, as it allows his work to engage with a broader audience, fostering a deeper appreciation and understanding of his artistic journey.

This journey, as traced in the exhibition, spans from his early days painting in the Netherlands to his evolution into sculpture, and remarkably, back to painting—showcasing a full-circle progression in his artistic expressions. This evolution is not just a chronicle of media but a testament to his perpetual quest for exploring new artistic avenues.

Sponsored by Valley First Financial Services, the CHBC TV segment positions Geert not only as a master of his craft but also as a pivotal figure in enriching the cultural tapestry of the Okanagan. His visionary contributions to the arts have not only shaped his legacy but have also left an indelible mark on the community.

2001 was the year marked by the installation of the "Building Communities" bronze sculpture, which now stands proudly in front of the Municipal Hall in Winfield, Lake Country, B.C.

Building Communities isn't just a sculpture; it's a beacon of our collective aspirations and values. Geert designed this piece with a profound understanding of the importance of unity and growth in our community.

The sculpture depicts interconnected figures, each supporting the other, symbolic of how individual efforts can weave together to create a strong and cohesive society. The decision to place this sculpture in front of the Municipal Hall was intentional.

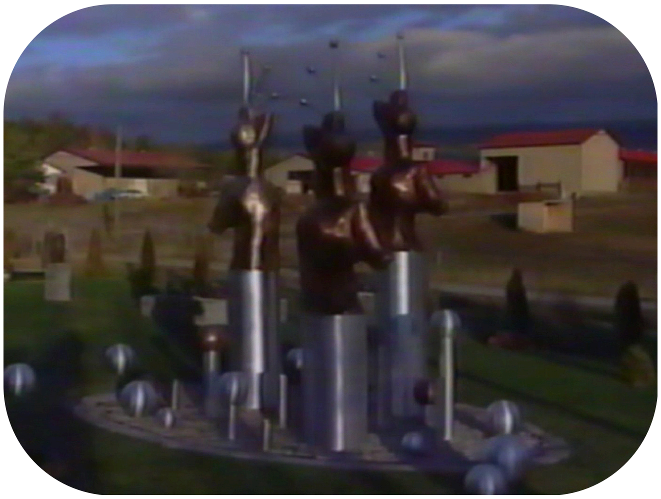
It serves as a daily reminder to all who pass by—residents and visitors alike—of our commitment to fostering a supportive and integrated community. The location in front of the Municipal Hall underscores its significance, situating it at the heart of our civic engagement and public discourse. The installation process itself was a moment of celebration, a time when community members came together to witness the addition of a new landmark to our town's landscape. It was a proud day for all involved, filled with a sense of accomplishment and hope for the future.

Building Communities continues to be a point of interest and pride for Lake Country. It's more than just an art installation; it's a reflection of our dedication to building a better community for current and future generations. We invite you to visit this inspiring sculpture, whether you're a local resident or a visitor, to experience firsthand the spirit of community that it so beautifully represents.

Geert Maas with Mike Roberts

The 2001 news clip "The Work of Geert Maas with Mike Roberts." Filmed in our enchanting sculpture garden in Central Okanagan, features one of Geert's most spiritually inspired creations— the "Ancestry" sculpture, and a series known as "Dancing Goddesses."

During the segment, Geert discusses his inspiration derived from celestial visions of female figures, which he fondly refers to as "goddesses." These aren't just any figures; they dance gracefully in the sky, each movement and form encapsulating divine femininity and the ethereal quality of myths. This inspiration birthed the creation of the "Dancing Goddesses," monumental sculptures that are not only a testament to Geert's artistic vision but are also masterpieces of technique and imagination.



Cast in bronze and adorned with various patinas, each goddess carries unique headdresses that echo the grandeur of ancient Greco-Roman times blended with a touch of the future. These headdresses, intricate and commanding, pair with aluminum spheres that dot their surroundings like stars or planets, further enhancing the otherworldly theme.

As we walked through the garden for the interview, I shared my deep admiration for these sculptures, particularly how they resonate with the viewer, invoking a sense of connection to something larger than life. The "Dancing Goddesses" stand proudly among other significant works, like "On the Beach" housed at Simon Fraser University, illustrating Geert's broad artistic range.

Looking ahead, we are thrilled at the prospect of these sculptures finding their rightful places in more prominent locations where more people can experience their majesty.

The upcoming large-scale sculpture symposium mentioned in the clip promises to elevate the profile of sculpture in the Okanagan, showcasing its profound impact as an art form.

This feature by CHBC TV, in collaboration with Mike Roberts, beautifully highlights the dynamic and joyous interaction between Geert's sculptures and their environment. It's a celebration of art's power to transform spaces and inspire communities.

2002 was a year marked by OTISS the - Okanagan Thompson International Sculpture Symposium - held right here in the Okanagan Thompson region, BC. Event photographers were Joyce and Bill Demeester. Geert was selected as one of several sculptors to participate in this symposium taking place from May to September.

The event was a significant milestone in our regional art community, bringing together talented sculptors from around the globe to share their skills, insights, and visions in a collaborative environment.

The symposium was not just a meeting of minds but a celebration of diverse artistic expressions manifested through sculpture. The symposium offered a platform for artists to engage in creative workshops, collaborative projects, and in-depth discussions about techniques, materials, and the evolving dynamics of contemporary sculpture.

Artists worked in various mediums, from traditional stone and bronze to modern composites and recycled materials, each adding their unique touch to the symposium. The event also provided an opportunity for local and international visitors to witness the art-making process firsthand, demystifying the techniques behind large-scale sculptural works.

One of the highlights was the community involvement. Local art students and enthusiasts volunteered at the event, gaining invaluable experience and mentorship from seasoned artists. This interaction not only enriched their learning but also infused the symposium with a vibrant, youthful energy.

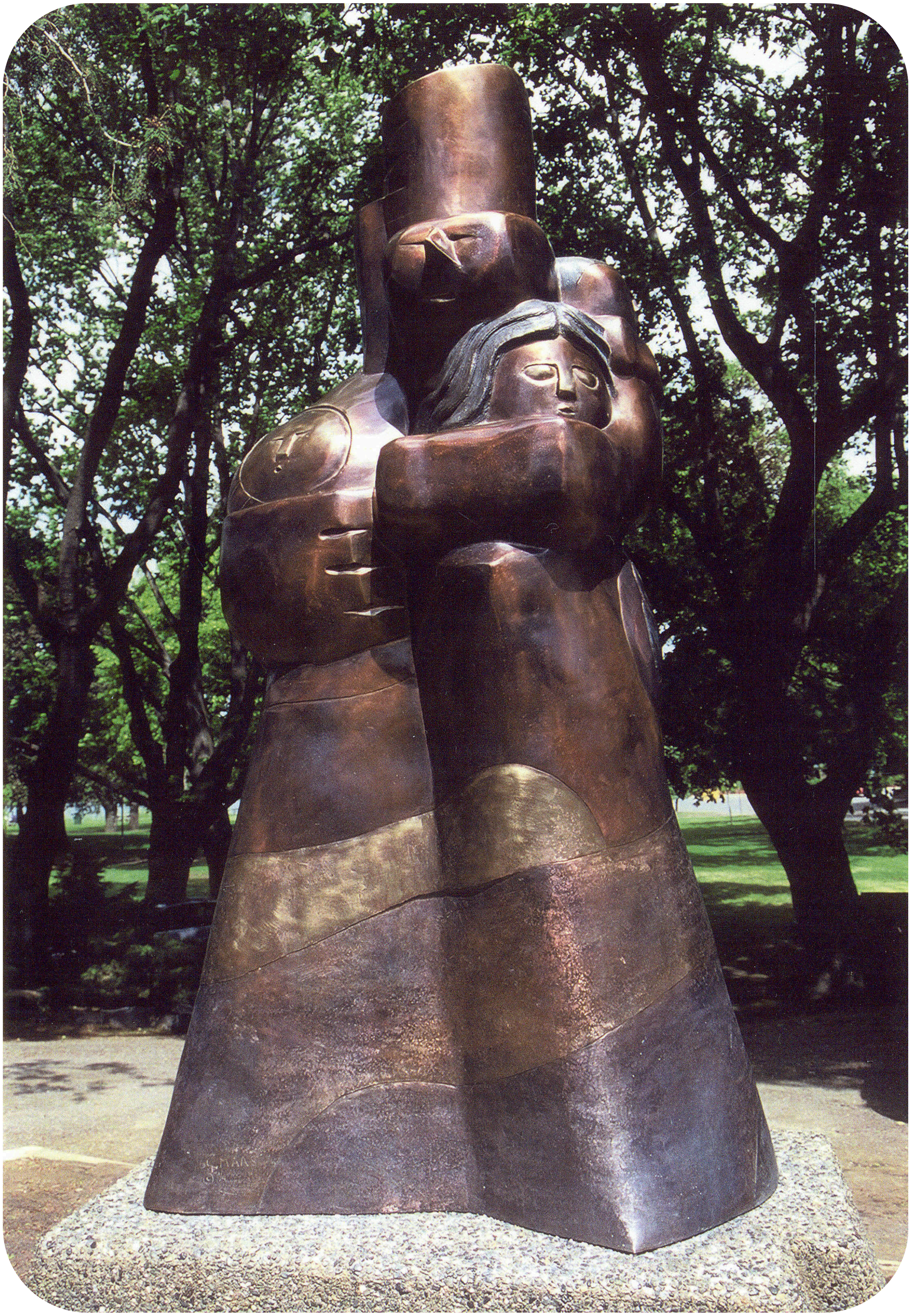
As part of the symposium, Geert unveiled a new monumental bronze sculpture, "Community in Motion," symbolizing the harmonious blend of cultures and ideas that the event represented.

This piece now stands in Riverfront Park in Kamloops, B.C., serving as a lasting reminder of the creativity and collaborative spirit that defined the 2002 symposium.

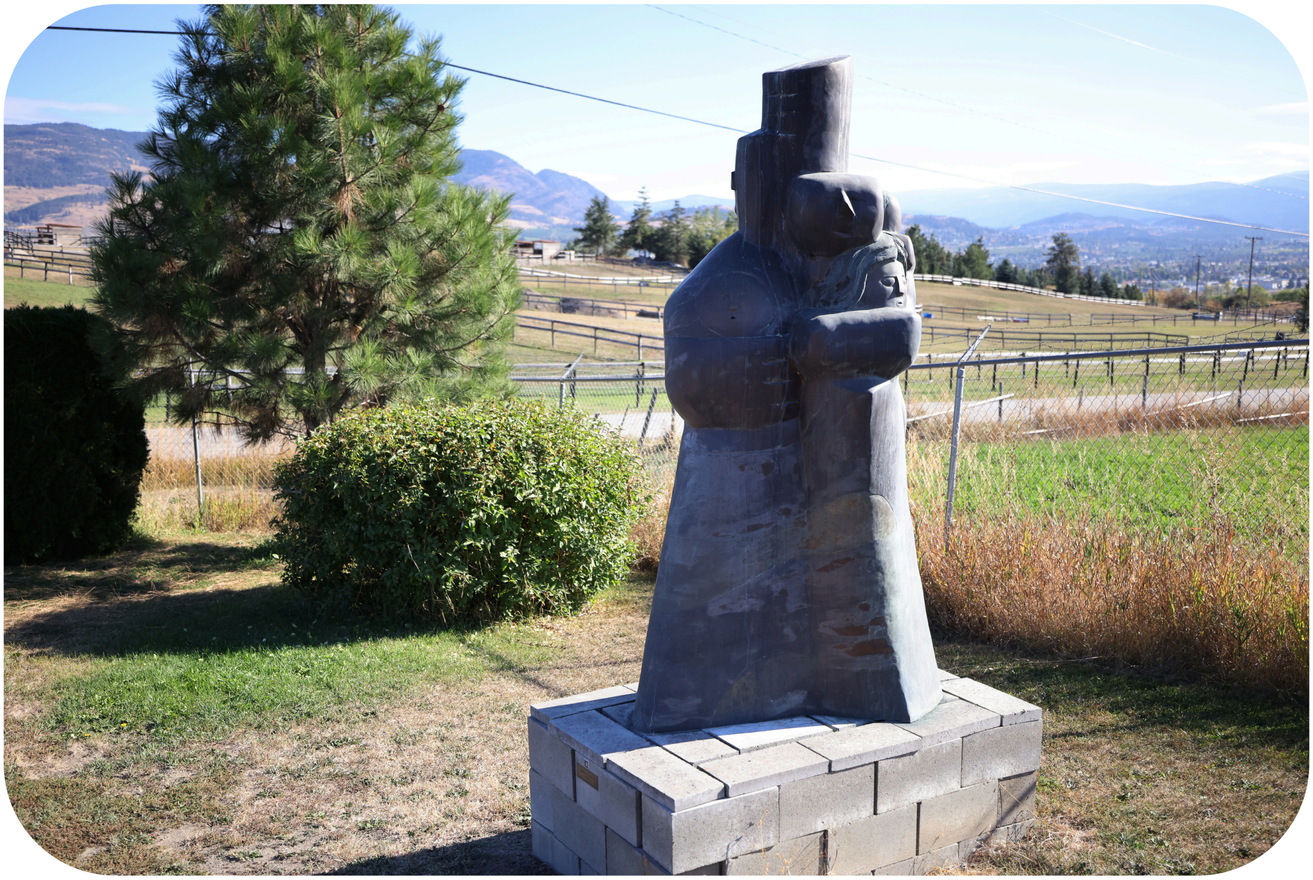
The International Sculpture Symposium was more than just an event; it was a transformative experience for our region and a beacon for artistic collaboration. It underscored the importance of shared spaces and moments where art not only decorates but dialogues, challenges, and unites.

We continue to reflect on the symposium’s impact and the ongoing inspiration it provides to artists and art lovers alike. It’s a testament to the power of art to bridge differences and bring people together under the universal language of creativity.

Geert's large "Community in Motion" sculpture bronze with multi-patinas is permanently located at Riverfront Park in Kamloops, B.C.

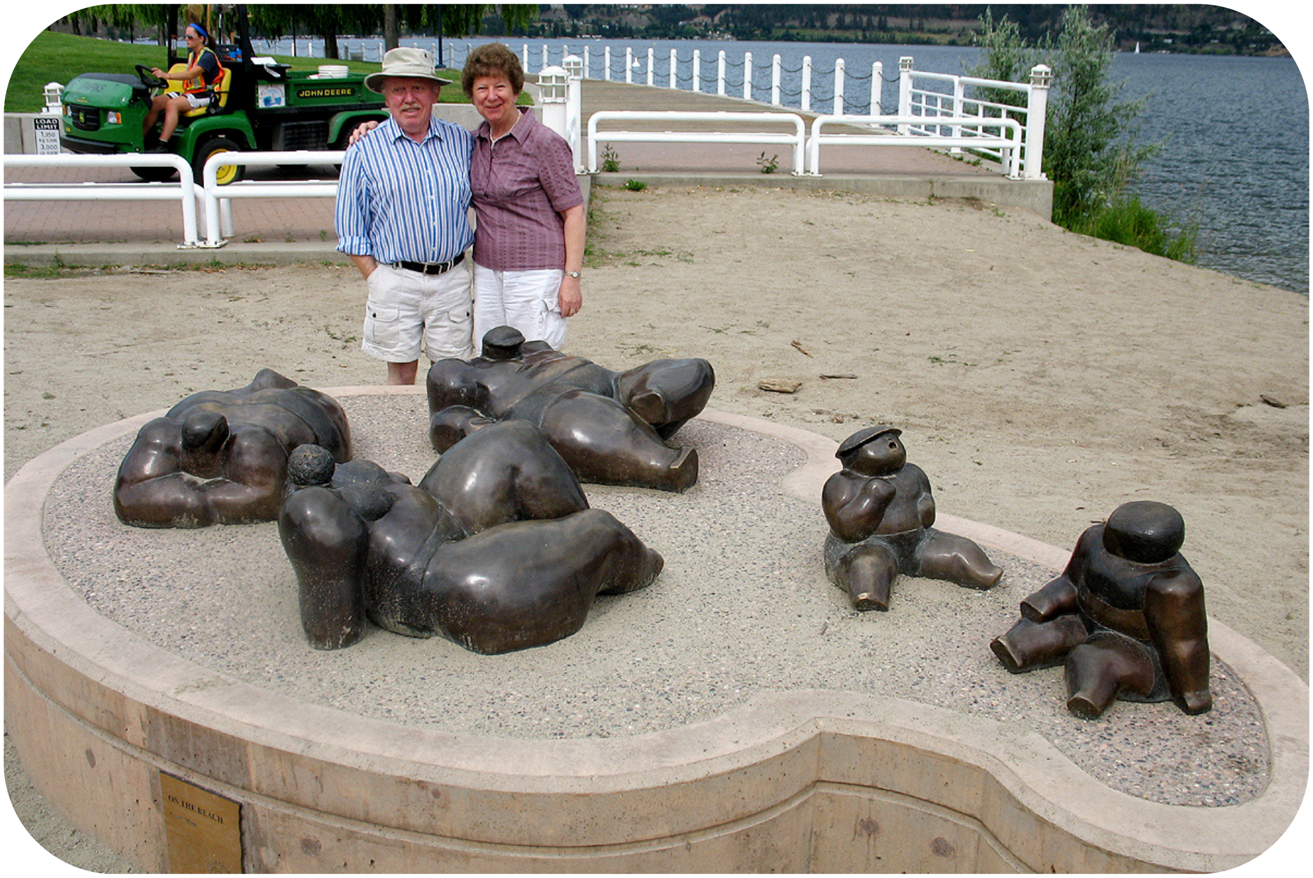


The sculpture resembles a striding human figure. The wave pattern on the figure's legs represents a connection with water. It intrigues through the complex display of faces, some abstract, some realistic. The different faces represent people from all cultures and backgrounds, young and old, that make up a vibrant community.



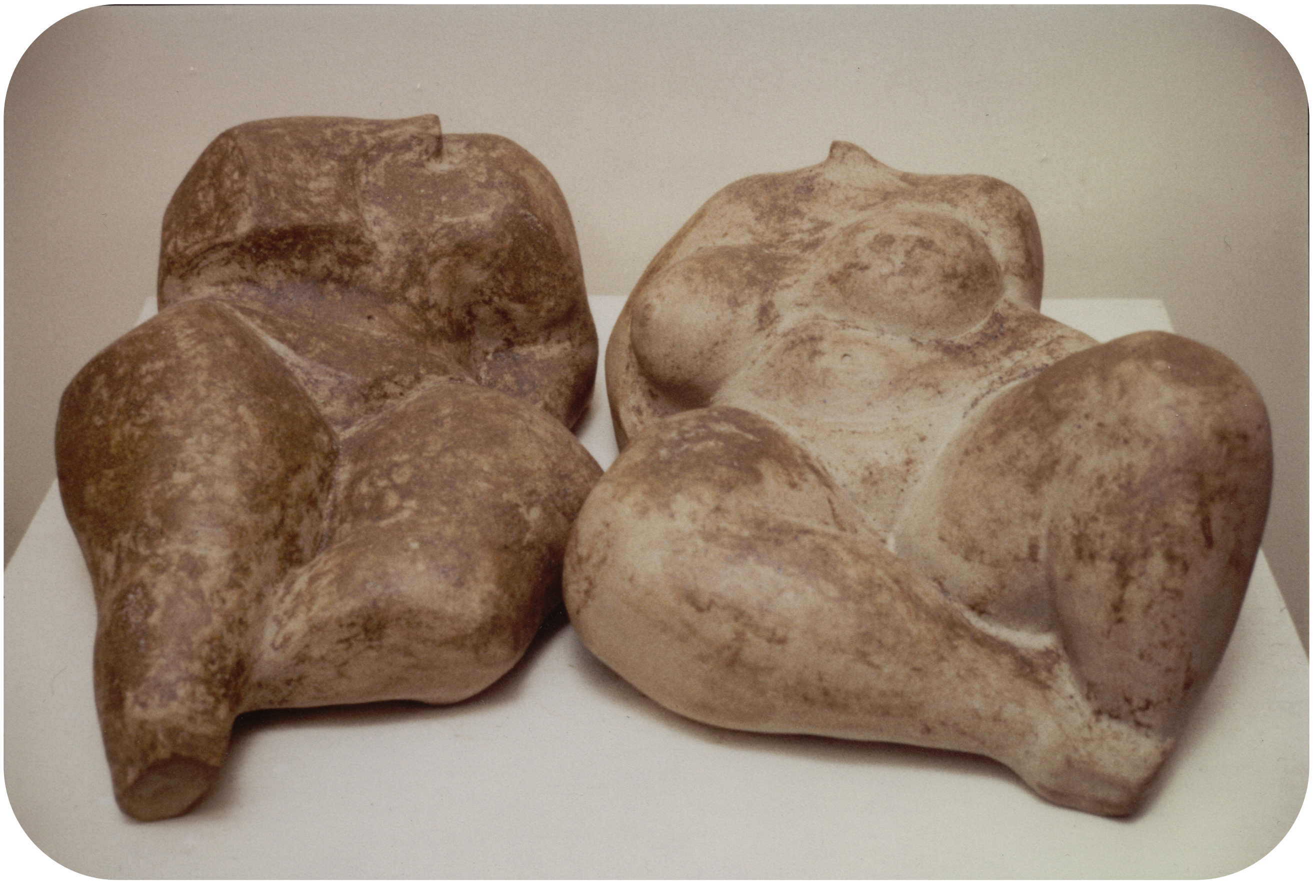
A second cast of "Community in Motion" is in our sculpture gardens. Gisela Harrison came from Kamloops to learn about the process and assisted us in the studio. Geert has worked with other apprentices as well.

In 2002, the City of Kelowna also acquired “On the Beach” bronze, close to life size, group sculpture for the permanent collection. In consultation, Geert designed the base in the form of a wave and the city crew built the concrete base topped with small aggregate. It is located at Waterfront Park at Okanagan Lake, downtown Kelowna.



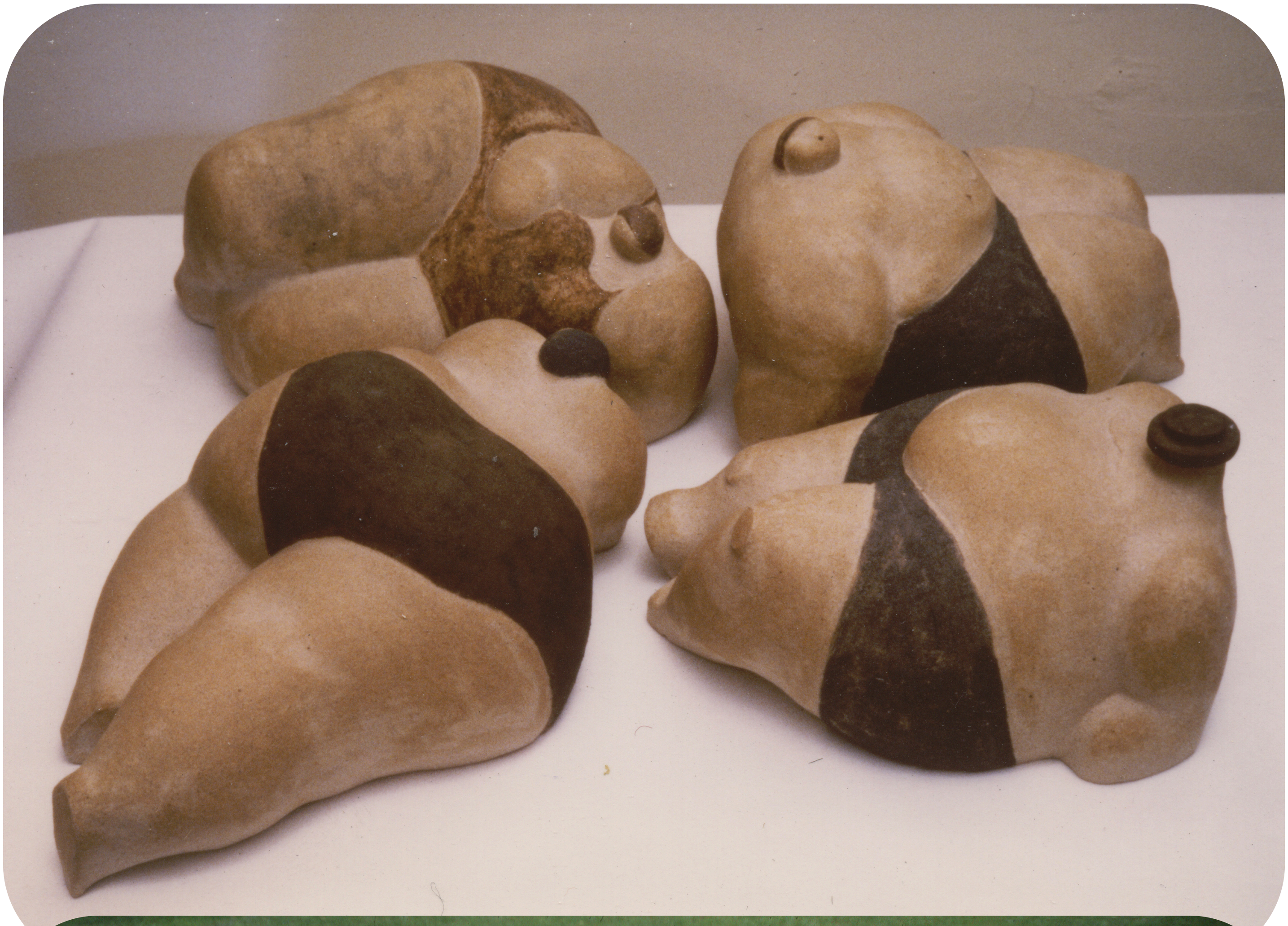
On the Beach

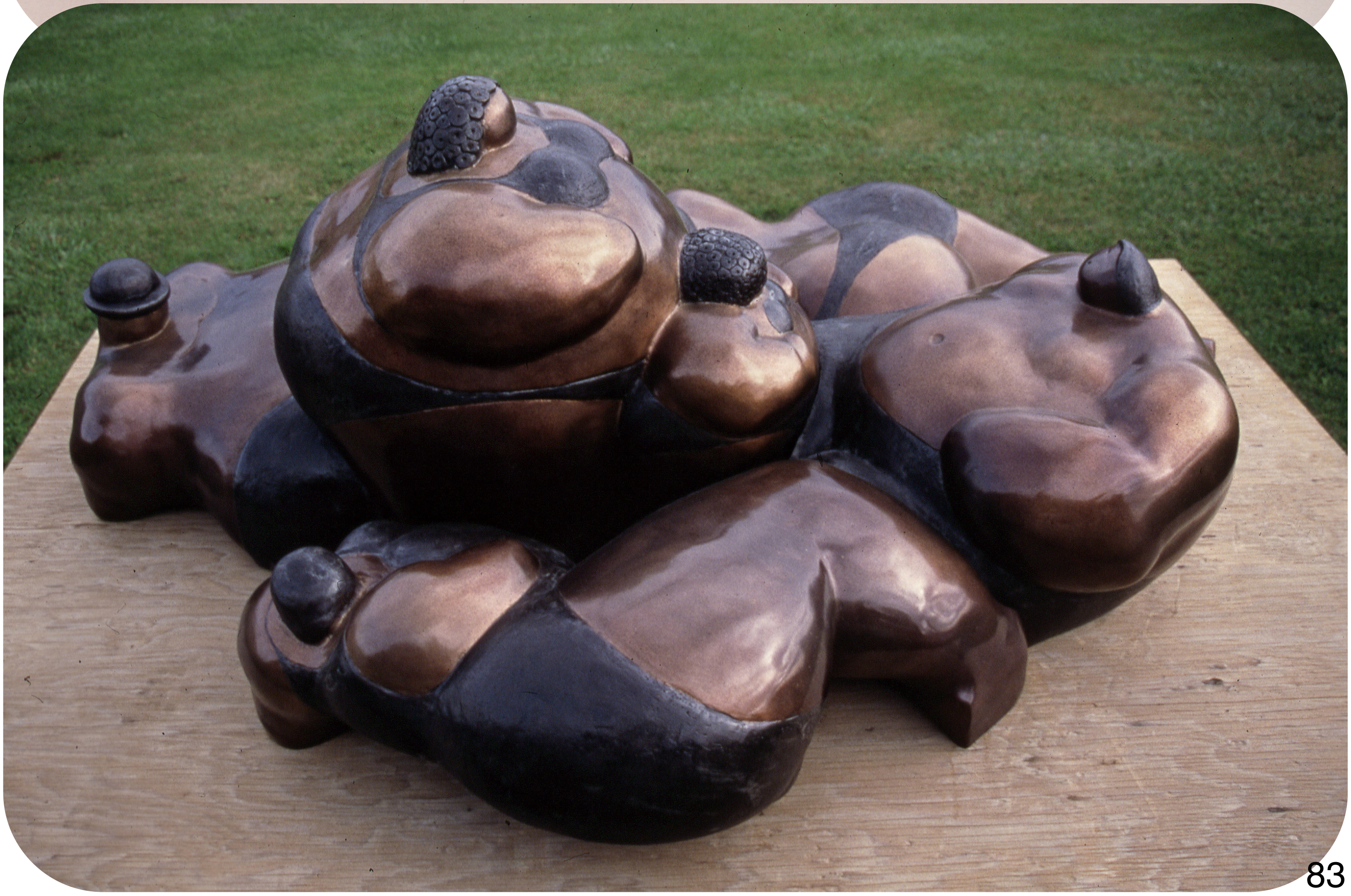
I'm delighted to explore the theme of 'On the Beach' artworks crafted by my husband, Geert. This series captures the essence of human leisure and joy, which Geert has intricately molded into various forms using multiple media."



"The 'On the Beach' theme draws its inspiration from our personal experiences at the local beaches in Kelowna. Observing people relaxed in bathing suits, enjoying the simple pleasures of sun and sand, has led Geert to create the Beach Boy and Beach Girl sculptures. These artworks not only depict the relaxed posture of beach-goers but also embody the spirit of Kelowna's favorite summer pastimes."

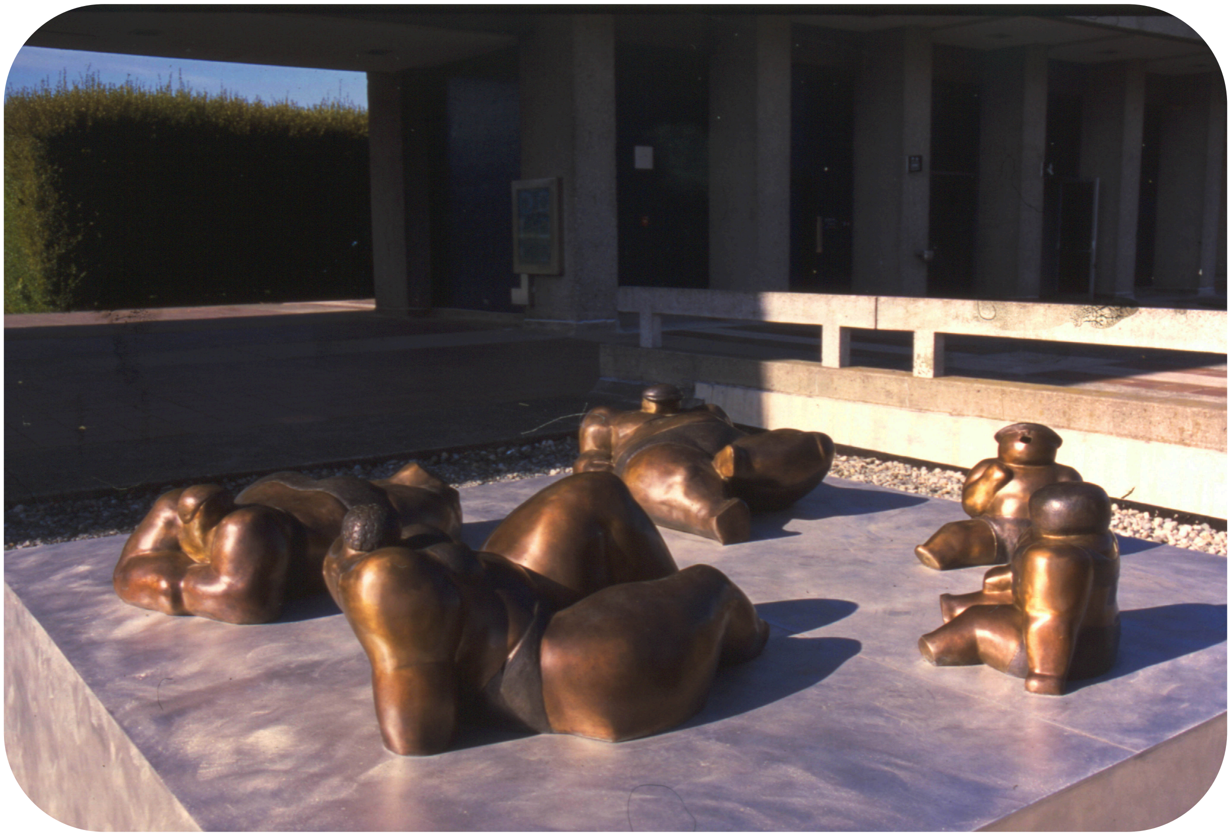
"Geert's sculptures are renowned for their rounded forms, which echo the rolling hills surrounding Kelowna. These forms also delve into the deeper themes of humanity, love, and humor, reflecting how people interact differently when alone compared to when they are with others. This sensitivity to human relationships and spatial dynamics is a hallmark of his artistic expression.





Significant exhibitions have featured the 'On the Beach' sculptures, including the simultaneous exhibitions at the Simon Fraser University's Galleries in Burnaby and at their Teck Gallery in Vancouver. These shows highlight the fusion of culture and art, bringing to life the beach culture in a bronze form, accompanied by groups of sunbathers including children.

The creative process began with clay models, which were then fired in an electric kiln. Following this, Geert employed the lost-wax casting method to transition these forms into bronze, a meticulous process involving local artisans at a nearby foundry. The final touches include applying multiple patinas to achieve realistic skin tones and textures on the sculptures, enhancing their lifelike appearance.



In 2002, a special installation of these sculptures was mounted on a curved concrete base designed to mimic a wave, enhancing their connection to the beach theme. This installation was permanently placed in Waterfront Park in downtown Kelowna, right by the beautiful Okanagan Lake, provides a perfect backdrop that complements the sculptures' theme.

These sculptures are more than just art; they are a celebration of life, leisure, and the human form, inviting onlookers of all ages to interact and reflect on the joys of simple pleasures. The 'On the Beach' series remains a beloved part of Kelowna's artistic landscape, embodying the community's spirit and the universal appeal of relaxation and joy.

HOW ON THE BEACH WAS FIRST CREATED

In the tranquil surroundings of Kelowna's picturesque beaches, beneath the protective shade of a tree, Geert Maas discovered the inspiration for one of his celebrated sculpture series, "On The Beach." This series captured the quintessential moments of leisure, family, and play, emblematic of lakeside life.

As I sat there, shaded from the sun because my skin burns so easily, I would watch my family—Elly and the kids—immerse themselves in the simple joys of sand and water," Geert recalls. The serene beach setting became his studio, the playful shouts and laughter of his children and their mother's interactions with the elements provided a live canvas for his creative mind.

I would sometimes sketch roughly while observing them; those moments felt suspended in time," he continues. The act of watching his children at play, so engrossed and carefree, sparked the conceptualization of sculptures that would later be admired for capturing the essence of human interaction with nature.

Geert's creative process was further enriched during a visit by his mother from the Netherlands.

"She was an avid swimmer, having learned to swim at the age of 70, and she absolutely loved the abundance of water here in Kelowna," Geert shares with a smile. Her enjoyment and the grace with which she took to the water added another layer of depth to his artistic reflections.

"The 'On The Beach' sculptures began right there, on those sunny shores. It was a synthesis of observation and personal connection, of seeing my loved ones interact with nature in such a joyful and uninhibited way," Geert explains. This series not only celebrates the physical joys found in those leisurely beach days but also encapsulates the profound bonds of family and the enduring allure of nature's playground.

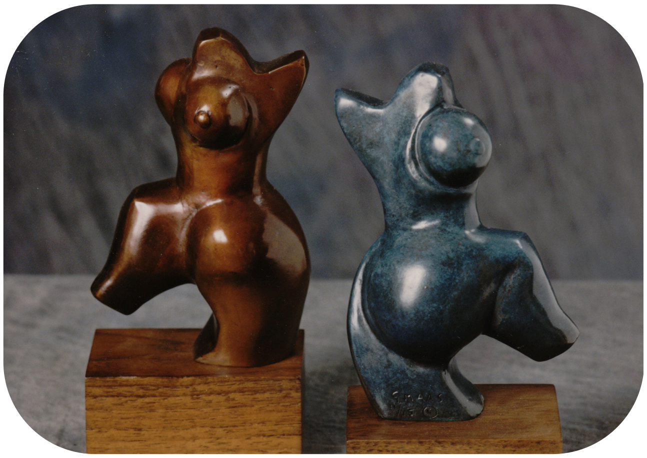
Through these sculptures, Geert Maas invites viewers to recall their own moments of relaxation and play, making "On The Beach" a universally relatable and cherished series, born from the simple act of sitting under a tree and watching the world unfold.

Almost simultaneously, Simon Fraser University announced the installation on a brushed aluminum base of their “On the Beach” bronze group sculpture on the Burnaby campus.

Goddesses of the Universe

I'm excited to introduce you to one of our most inspiring creations, the 'Goddesses of the Universe' installation. This piece is a vivid celebration of life and cosmic energy, depicted through dancing jubilance.

Geert's maquette "Moulin Rouge" inspired us to create the "Goddesses of the Universe" multimedia installation. This installation is a celebration of life and the female expressing jubilance and inspiration. The spheres in aluminum and copper positioned at different levels symbolize planets. Towering above these spheres are the monumental sculptures of cast bronze with various patinas adorned by stainless steel head decorations sitting atop brushed aluminum pillars of different heights.



The 'Goddesses of the Universe' began as a maquette, a small-scale model, which Geert meticulously developed through various stages into a grand multimedia installation. This work has evolved into one of the major sculptural highlights of our permanent collection.

The installation features spheres made of aluminum and copper, to symbolize the planets in our vast universe. Rising above these metal spheres are the monumental sculptures of cast bronze.These figures are adorned with stainless steel head decorations, each uniquely sitting atop brushed aluminum pillars of varying heights.

The composition and materials of 'Goddesses of the Universe' are carefully chosen to convey a message of harmony and celestial beauty. The use of stainless steel, aluminum, copper, and gravel not only enhances the aesthetic appeal but also adds to the thematic depth of the installation. The towering figures reach a height of four and a quarter meters, or approximately 14 feet, emphasizing their majestic presence. For the installation of the three "Goddesses" Gerhard was again in charge with his heavy-duty crane assisted by Rick Lake for this very precise work of bolting each one in place.

The installation spans an area of seven and a half by seven and a half meters, or 25 by 25 feet, and weighs approximately three tons, making it a significant physical and visual presence. Each element of the installation—from the patinas on the bronze to the arrangement of the figures—has been designed to create a dynamic interaction of forms and shadows, mirroring the dance of celestial bodies across the sky.

20th Anniversary of Geert Maas Sculpture Gardens and Gallery

From May 1st to October 1st, 2004, we hosted a unique exhibition titled 'Goddesses, Ancestors, Sunbathers: A Two-Decade Journey.'

This exhibition was a comprehensive retrospective that celebrated the rich tapestry of Geert's creative endeavors over the years. Each artwork on display was a chapter of our story, revealing the evolution of Geert's artistic style and thematic focus.

The festivities reached their zenith during our anniversary celebration on Sunday, June 6th, 2004.

Held at our scenic location at 250 Reynolds Road, the event was a vibrant affair that drew art enthusiasts from across the community and beyond.

The day was filled with joy and nostalgia, marked by opening remarks that took guests on a journey through the history of our gallery and gardens. We shared stories of our first days in Kelowna, the challenges we overcame, and the successes we celebrated. The air was filled with laughter and reminiscences as we cut the anniversary cake and raised glasses in a toast to the future. We were honoured by the presence of Kelowna Mayor, Sharon Shephard.

This 20th-anniversary exhibition wasn't just an art show; it was an immersive experience that connected visitors with the enduring spirit of creativity that drives the Maas family. It showcased how Geert's works have resonated with diverse audiences, bridging cultural and geographical divides. The exhibition featured key pieces such as the enigmatic 'Goddesses,' the reflective 'Ancestors,' and the lively 'Sunbathers,' each set against the backdrop of our meticulously curated gardens.

2005 was a year that marked an exciting chapter in our artistic journey. As a member of AMSA (American Medallic Sculpture Association) Geert Maas's participation at the exhibition “Beyond Two Dimensions: The Fine Art of Medals” at the esteemed Forest Lawn Museum in Glendale, California. This exhibition was not just a display; it was a profound dialogue between Geert's European artistic heritage and the vibrant cultural tapestry of Southern California.

The Forest Lawn Memorial-Parks and Mortuaries Museum, known for its commitment to showcasing international art that spans genres and epochs, provided the perfect setting for Geert's medals. Visitors were treated to a series of his works, each piece echoing the thematic elements of human experience and universal connectivity that Geert is renowned for. The exhibition showed eight of his medals, including Unity II, Divide, Energetic Movement, Wardemons, Joyous Motion, Faces, Timeless Inscriptions, and Bookworm, known for their emotive presence.

This particular exhibit was significant as it not only displayed Geert's ability to communicate through the language of medallic sculptures but also highlighted his mastery in integrating form with spiritual and existential themes. The pieces selected for this exhibition were particularly focused on concepts of peace, reflection, and community, resonating deeply with an international audience. Participating in the Forest Lawn Museum exhibition allowed us to engage with a broader audience, bridging continents and cultures through the universal language of art.

It was a reaffirmation of the power of art to transcend boundaries—geographical, cultural, and temporal. We are proud of the reception Geert's works received at this prestigious venue, and it stands as a testament to his enduring appeal and relevance in the global art scene. This engagement not only broadened our horizons but also reinforced our mission to contribute meaningfully to the dialogue on contemporary sculpture and medallic art.

Looking back, the Forest Lawn Museum exhibition remains a cornerstone of our international exhibitions, capturing the essence of Geert's artistic philosophy and the breadth of his creativity. We continue to draw inspiration from this experience as we move forward, embracing new opportunities to share Geert's vision with the world.

The Kelowna Centennial Time Capsule

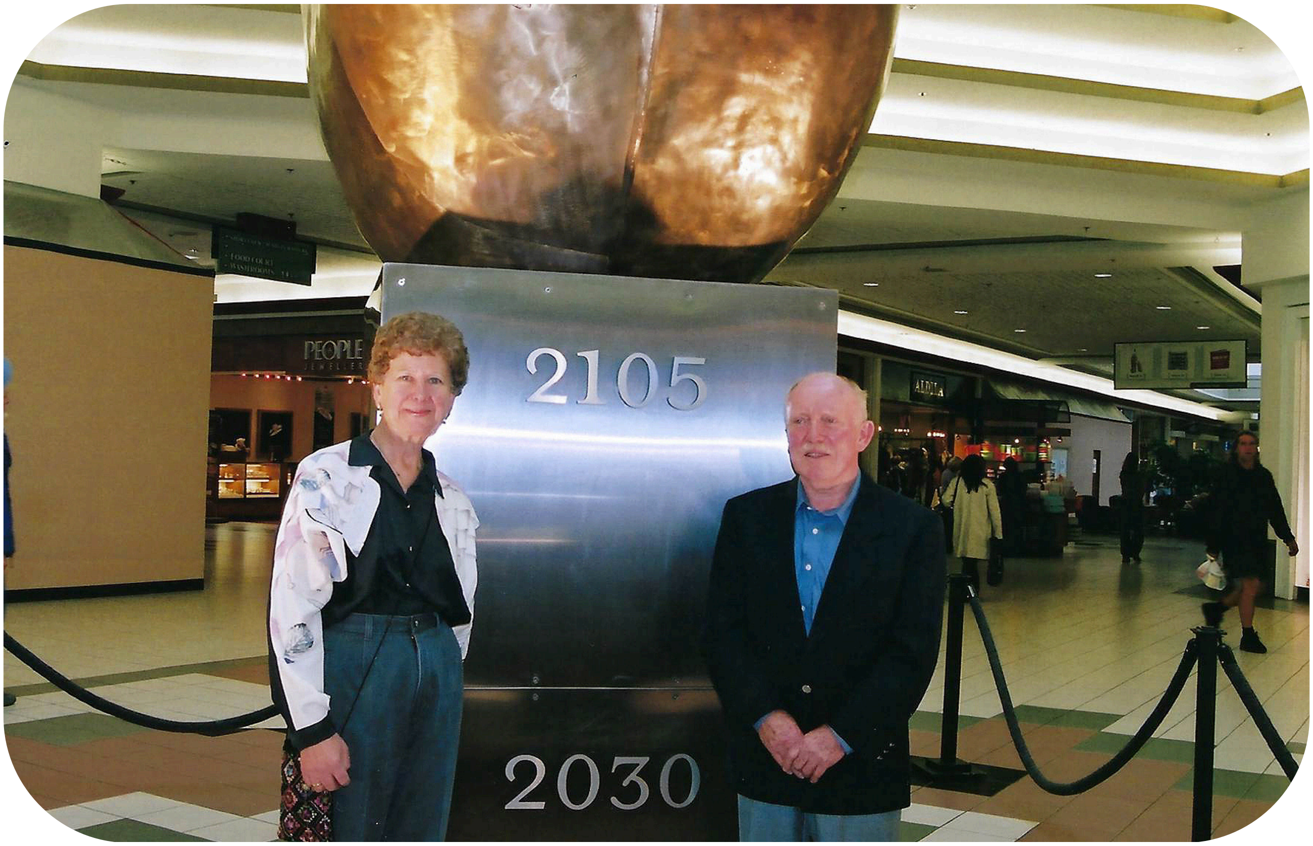
The Kelowna Centennial Time Capsule was unveiled in 2005 inside Orchard Park Shopping Center amid a large gathering of community members, illustrating the local commitment to preserving our cultural heritage. The ceremony was documented thoroughly by Miss Litti Birker, whose photographs captured the entire process, from the inception of the idea to the final unveiling.

Nested within the brushed stainless steel base of the time capsule are two compartments designed to bridge generations. The first compartment is set to be opened every 25 years, starting in 2030, allowing for periodic updates and reflections from successive generations. The second compartment is sealed until the year 2105, preserving messages and artifacts for a century.

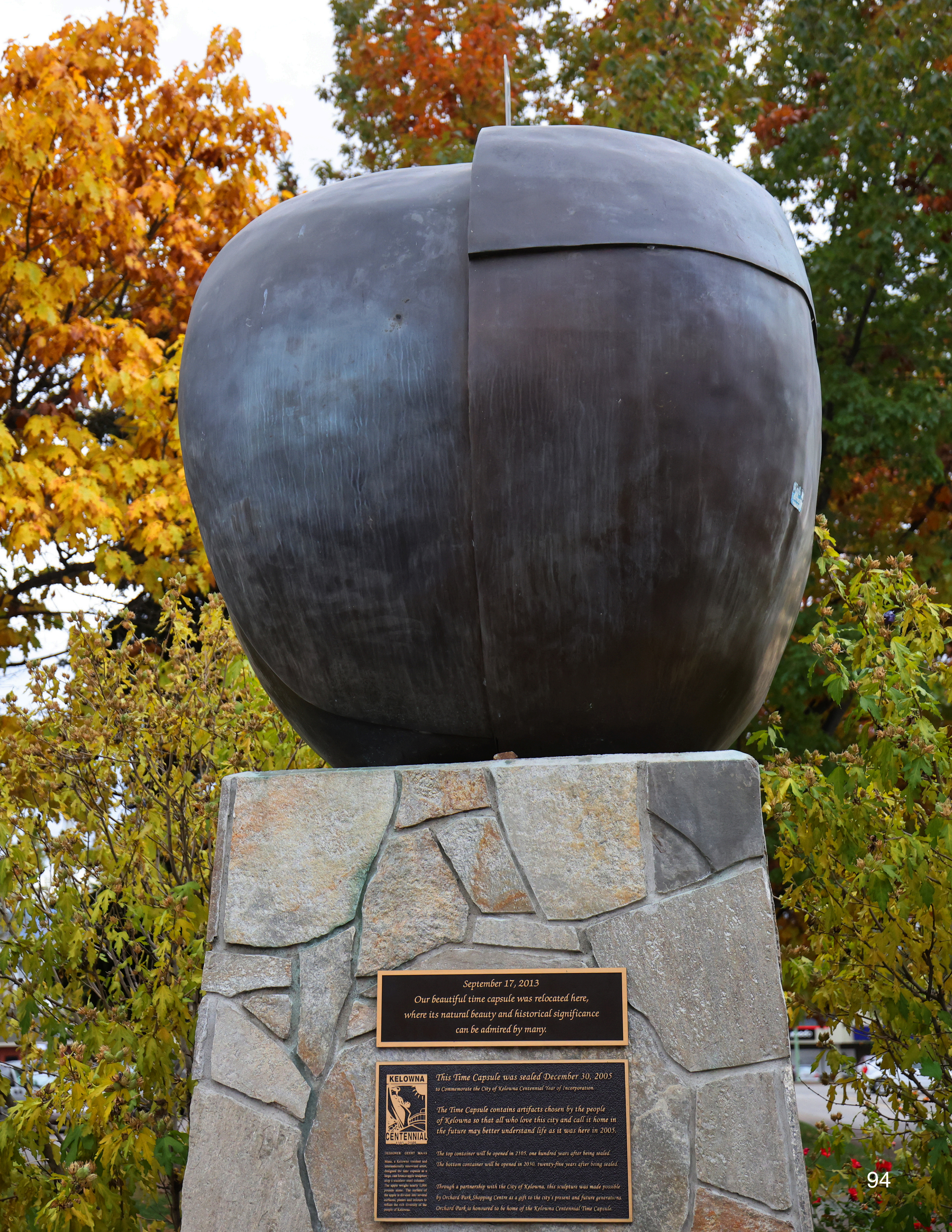
Among the contents are envelopes filled with letters and photographs from citizens, offering personal insights and messages intended for future residents of Kelowna. These snapshots of current lives and times are meant to provide a window into the past when they are finally revealed.

The physical manifestation of the time capsule is a large bronze apple with a stainless steel stem, standing over five feet tall and weighing more than 700 pounds, sitting atop a brushed stainless steel column holding two containers with artifacts, to a total height over 3.60 meters or 12 feet. This sculpture is not just a vessel for historical artifacts but a piece of art that reflects the innovative spirit of Kelowna. The surface of the apple is intricately divided into several planes, each representing different facets of our community's life and history.

The creation of this monumental piece involved meticulous planning and skilled craftsmanship. From the initial clay modeling over an armature to the final casting in bronze, each step required precise coordination and dedication. The process was labor-intensive, involving various stages of clay work, mold making, bronze casting, and the final detailing and patination to achieve the desired finish.



Now permanently located near the food court entrance at Springfield Road, the Kelowna Centennial Time Capsule stands as a testament to our community's commitment to heritage and the arts. It invites visitors and locals alike to reflect on the passage of time and the importance of preserving our collective memories.



September 17, 2013

Our beautiful time capsule was relocated here,
where its natural beauty and historical significance
can be admired by many.

KELOWNA
CENTENNIAL
1905 - 2005

DESIGNER GEERT MAAS

Maas, a Kelowna resident and internationally renowned artist, designed the time capsule as a large, cast bronze apple sculpture atop a stainless steel column. The apple weighs nearly 1,000 pounds alone. The surface of the apple is divided into several surfaces, planes and colours to reflect the rich diversity of the people of Kelowna.

This Time Capsule was sealed December 30, 2005
to Commemorate the City of Kelowna Centennial Year of Incorporation.

The Time Capsule contains artifacts chosen by the people of Kelowna so that all who love this city and call it home in the future may better understand life as it was here in 2005.

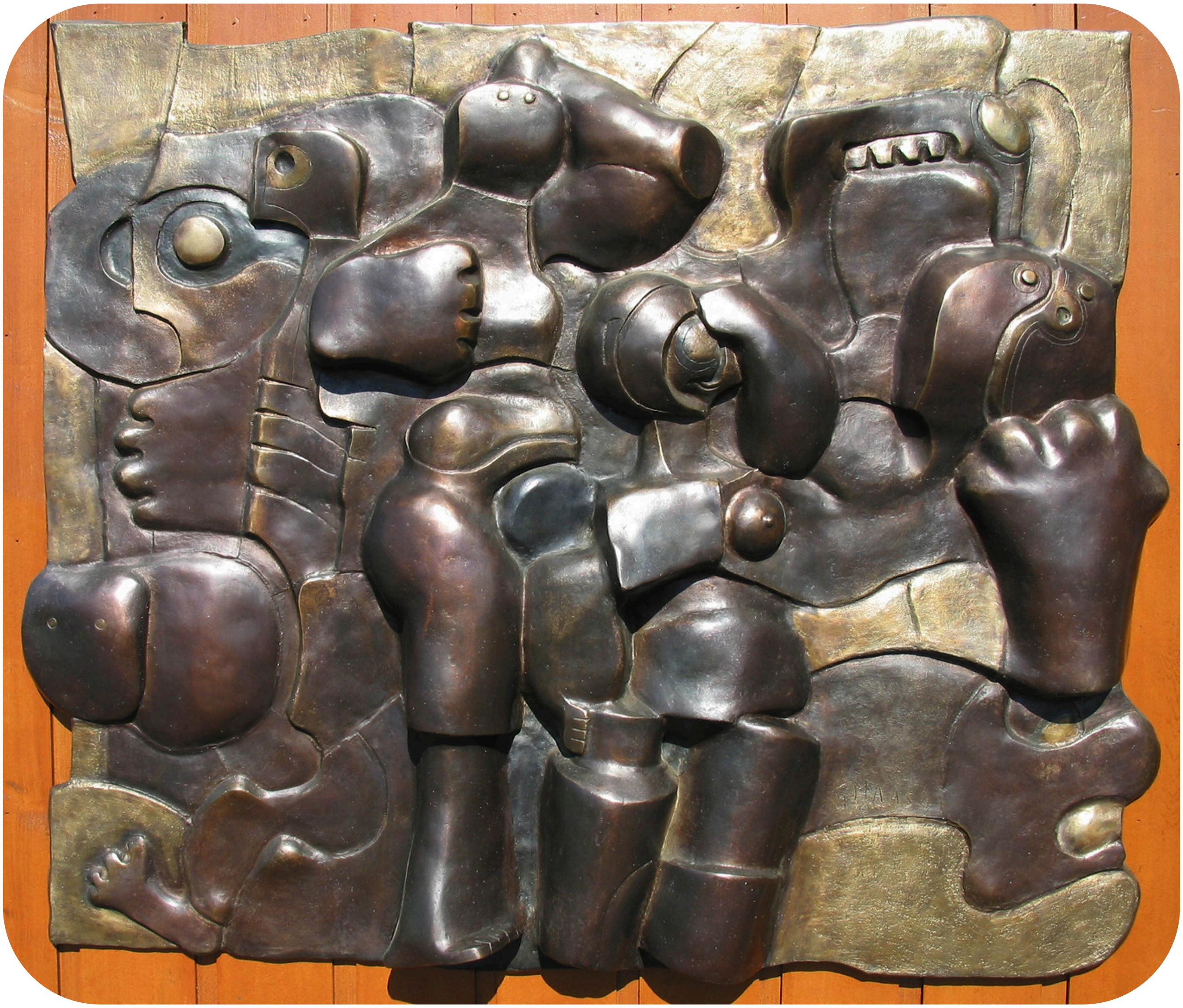
The top container will be opened in 2105, one hundred years after being sealed.
The bottom container will be opened in 2030, twenty-five years after being sealed.

Through a partnership with the City of Kelowna, this sculpture was made possible by Orchard Park Shopping Centre as a gift to the city's present and future generations. Orchard Park is honoured to be home of the Kelowna Centennial Time Capsule.

2006 Bellevue Sculpture Exhibition

In 2006, Geert's sculptures were featured in the prestigious Biennial Bellevue Sculpture Exhibition in Bellevue, Washington. This event, held from June 17 to October 9, 2006, is a vibrant showcase for contemporary sculpture that draws artists and audiences from across the globe.

This particular edition of the exhibition was especially memorable for us. Two of Geert's bronze pieces, 'Ancestry II' and 'Spirits', a wall sculpture, were selected from over 500 entries worldwide, making it into the final display of 40 sculptures from the U.S., Canada, and Europe. The selection process was rigorous, emphasizing the uniqueness and the communicative power of the works displayed.



'Ancestry II' is a profound exploration of heritage and continuity, cast in bronze, its textured surfaces and interlinked forms speak to the complex ties that bind generations. 'Spirits', on the other hand, is an ethereal wall sculpture that captures the fleeting, almost mystical aspects of human existence. Both pieces reflect Geert's deep engagement with themes of human connection and the spiritual dimensions of existence.

We personally delivered these artworks to Bellevue and attended the opening night celebration, which took place in the new City Hall—a modern and expansive venue that provided a fitting backdrop for the diverse range of sculptures. The atmosphere was one of celebration and deep appreciation for the art and the stories each piece conveyed.

The exhibition was accompanied by a catalogue, which not only featured photographs of each sculpture but also included artist statements and critiques, offering insights into the creative processes and inspirations behind the works.

This catalogue remains a cherished document of the event, encapsulating the spirit and the artistic dialogue of the exhibition.

Participating in the Bellevue Sculpture Exhibition was not just an honor; it was an affirmation of Geert's place within the international art community. It provided us with the opportunity to meet and exchange ideas with other artists and art lovers from around the world, enriching our own perspectives and inspiring future projects.

This event stands out in our memories as a highlight of 2006, symbolizing our commitment to sharing our artistic vision on a global stage. It was a reminder of the power of sculpture to connect across cultural boundaries and to speak a universal language of form, emotion, and beauty.

Spirit Of Kelowna Project (2006)

The Spirit of Kelowna, a symbol of resilience, began in the wake of the Okanagan Mountain Park Fire of 2003, a tragedy that transformed this community. When that fire swept through, it was met by an equally powerful response—a united outpouring of compassion and determination. Kelowna's people came together to recover and rebuild, helping those affected in ways that left a profound impact on everyone involved. The Okanagan Mountain Park Fire Recovery Society, formed to channel support to affected residents, eventually had some remaining funds—about $33,000. With a unique vision for a lasting tribute, these funds were gifted to the City's Public Art Program. The hope was to create something that would forever capture the spirit of our community.

In 2006, the City put out a call for artists, seeking proposals for a public artwork that could express community spirit. My husband, Geert Maas, was drawn to this idea immediately, and he submitted a concept. Out of 11 proposals, Geert's was selected. The idea was simple but profound: he proposed to capture the essence of Kelowna in 104 bronze medallions, each telling its own story, woven together as a tapestry of community pride and resilience.

Geert's plan was ambitious. He wanted these medallions to be crafted not just by him but by 102 Kelowna residents, each one representing a year from 1905, when our city was incorporated, to 2007.

In a series of 10 workshops, spanning from May to September 2007, we welcomed residents to our studio. Participants came from all walks of life—students, seniors, artists, and those who had never touched clay or bronze before.

Geert and I worked with each one, guiding them through the process: first, they created a clay model, then a plaster mold, and finally a wax replica of their design.

After the wax medallions were prepared, they were sent to Pyramid Bronze, a local foundry, for casting. When the bronze pieces returned to the studio, participants were invited back to apply the final touches. Wearing provided gloves, they polished and hand-sanded each medallion, making it uniquely theirs. Geert was adamant that this project wouldn't just be about technique; it would also be a lesson in artistic vision. He wanted participants to bring their own ideas to life, to see their thoughts and emotions become tangible.

At our home, the Geert Maas Sculpture Gardens, we hosted an unveiling event in September 2007, where all the medallions were displayed for the first time. It was an emotional day—participants and their families saw their contributions as part of a larger story, realizing how their voices had come together to form a powerful symbol of Kelowna's unity.

We needed a permanent home for this tribute. City Hall was chosen, and the 104 bronze medallions were set in two rammed earth walls supervised by Penticton's Solum Rammed Earth. This total 10-meter wall, with its layers of local earth in different hues, was a canvas as much as a foundation.

Geert was in charge of selecting the colors. These bands like geological strata, represent the rich layers of culture and history in our community. Just as the earth holds memories, the walls hold the memories of Kelowna. Specially designed wooden forms were used to create the space in which the medallions were then set to be discovered by the viewer, a treasure of Kelowna's spirit preserved in bronze.

Some unique details were added to the installation to enhance its symbolism. We wanted people to see the historical and environmental elements that have shaped Kelowna. So, for the gateway between the walls, we used salvaged wood from the Kelowna Secondary School, another building lost to fire, creating a bridge between past and present. Local artist Carole Tetlow created a beautiful cast-glass title panel, which softly reflects light and invites viewers to look deeper. A photo-wall documents the journey of this project, preserving each participant's contribution.

The installation is now one of the first things people see as they enter City Hall through the south lobby. It's positioned near a skylight, and as the light changes throughout the day, it dances across the medallions, casting shadows that shift, making each visit a unique experience. The weekends of May 31 – June 16, 2008, a large group of volunteers assisted us in the construction of 2 earth rammed walls under the guidance of "Solum Rammed Earth – Green building Solutions".

Geert and I spent time after City Hall was closed to do the layout for mounting the medallions. Rick Lake and Esteban Castillo-Vega professionally mounted each medallion, having a short metal stub attached, separately into the walls. On August 16, 2008, a public unveiling and dedication of the installation in City Hall upon completion of the project was attended by many.

CASHIER
PAYMENTS

Mike Roberts for CHBC-TV “Okanagan Now” covered the process in Geert’s Studio.

The “Spirit of Kelowna A CELEBRATION OF ART & COMMUNITY”, was produced and published by The Okanagan Institute. The 127 page booklet featured each participant in alphabetical order, the title, story and photo of their medallion. The Public Art Committee requested at the end of the project that Geert and I had to make a medal to be added to the finished medallions.

On August 16, 2008, exactly five years after the lightning strike that ignited the Okanagan Mountain Park Fire, we dedicated The Spirit of Kelowna. This date was intentional, chosen to remind us of the resilience that emerged from that day and of the ongoing strength of this community.

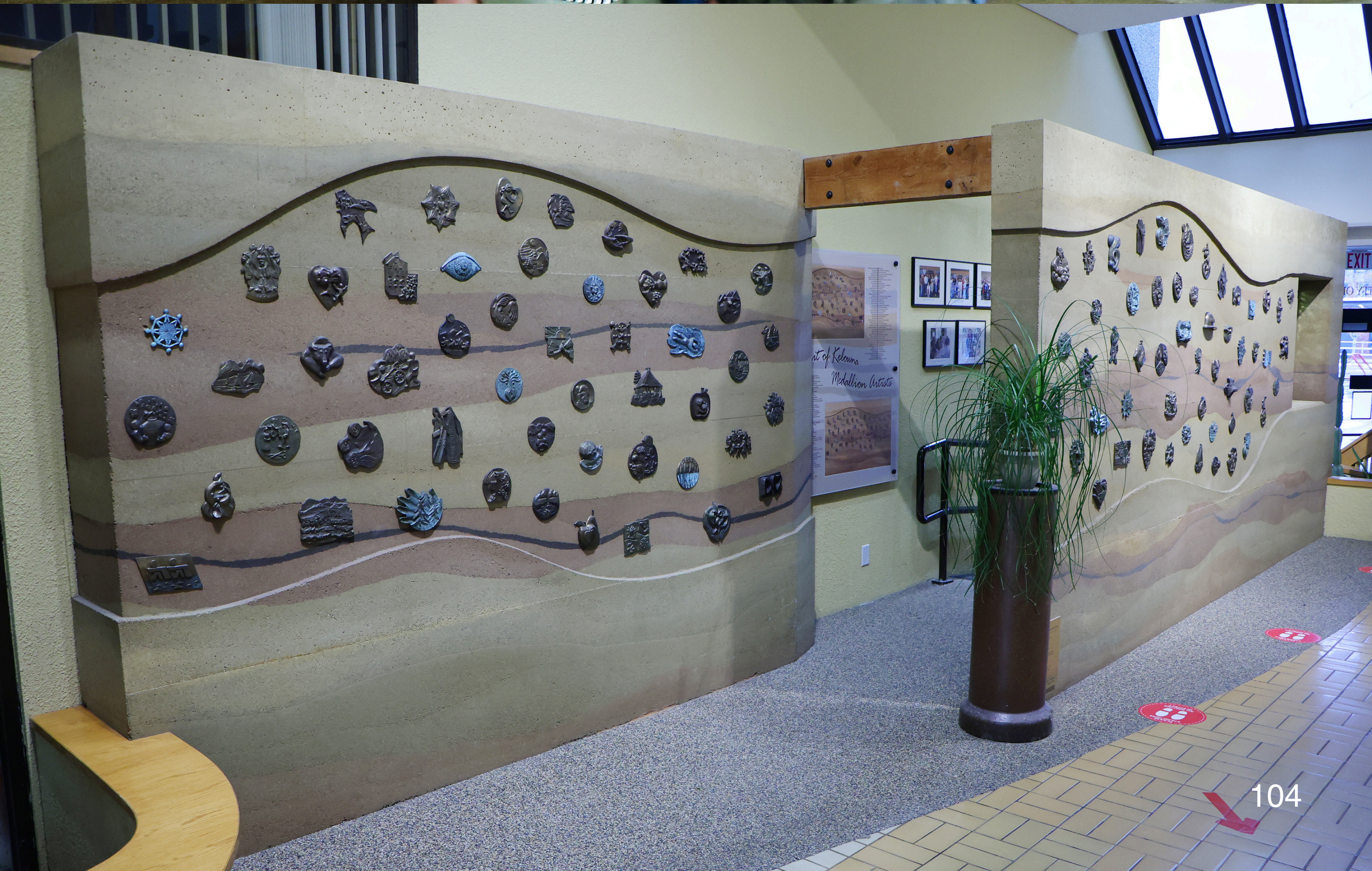
The Spirit of Kelowna holds more than just bronze. It holds a vision of community. People who might not have known each other before, from every age group and background, came together, creating something enduring. Geert always said that art doesn’t belong solely to galleries and museums; it belongs to people. By guiding others to express themselves, he saw his role not as the sole artist but as a teacher for others to find their voices. Each medallion is a personal statement, capturing pride, memories, and aspirations for this place we all call home.

The wall itself is symbolic. We used as little water and cement as possible, making it an eco-friendly statement about sustainability. Volunteers helped build the walls, each contributing their extra time to reach the finish in displaying the medallions for generations to view. And so, the wall is a shared canvas, both literally and figuratively.

As visitors approach the installation, they encounter the medallions close up. Some depict symbols of our agricultural past, others reflect the city’s beautiful landscapes, while others are purely abstract, representing personal reflections. Walking along the wall is like walking through Kelowna’s story, seeing it through the eyes of the people who live here.

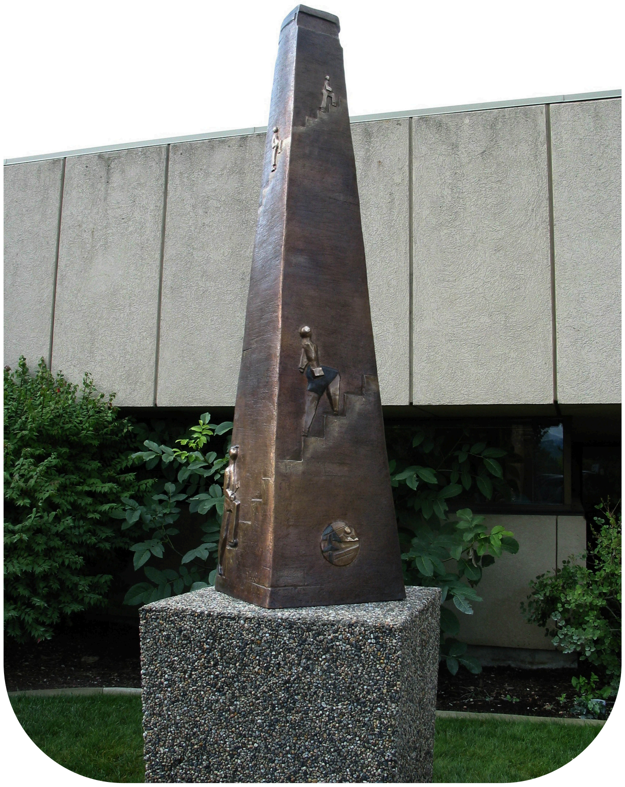
Geert always says, ‘Art needs benefactors and participants, just as a community does.’ We were grateful for the patrons who made this possible, especially those who understood the importance of including everyone in this project. This spirit, the generosity of time, talent, and heart from so many, is what makes Kelowna’s story enduring.

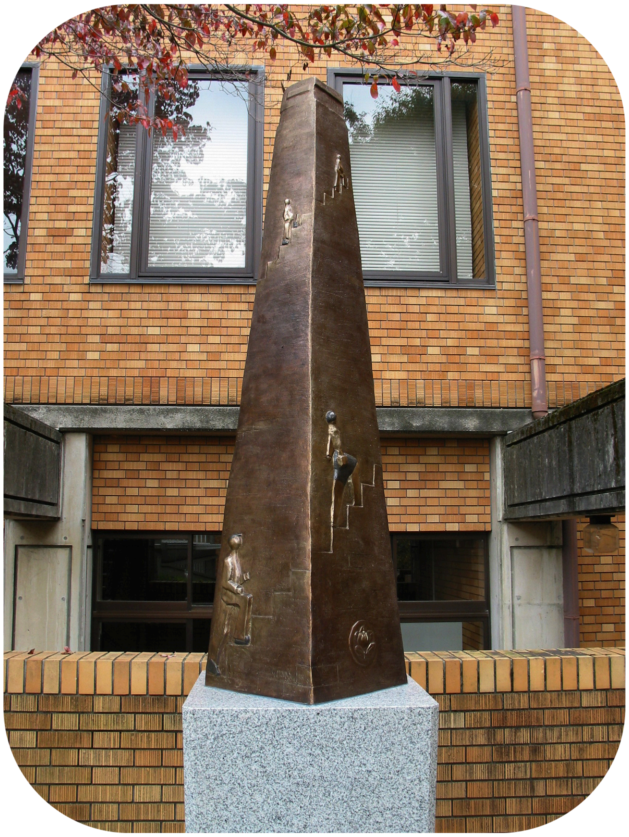
The Spirit of Kelowna is a living history, inviting each new generation to reflect on what community means. It’s a reminder that the spirit of a place is more than its buildings and landscapes; it’s in the people, in their creative expressions, in their resilience, and in the connections that bind them together. This project is not just art; it’s a testament to who we are.


of Kelowna
Medallion Artists
EXIT

2009: Destiny Sculptures

The Bronze Destiny Sculptures are a symbol of educational journeys and cultural exchanges as well as a prestigious commission by the Okanagan College in British Columbia and Tachibana University in Kyoto, Japan. These sculptures celebrate the 20th anniversary of a fruitful cultural exchange and partnership between these institutions.





Each sculpture, standing over 1.6 meters tall, features figures ascending an obelisk-like structure, symbolizing the educational and life journey of students. The design, resembling an endless column, represents the perpetual growth and development inherent in education. This metaphor extends to the cultural journey embarked upon by the students and faculty from these two diverse cultures.

The sculptures are not just art; they embody the bridge of understanding and friendship between Okanagan College and Tachibana University. Incorporated within each sculpture are two bronze medallions, proudly bearing the insignias of each institution, further cementing this international bond.

The unveiling ceremonies of these sculptures were landmark events. At Okanagan College's Vernon campus, the sculpture was unveiled on September 8, 2009, and a corresponding ceremony at Tachibana University took place on October 24, 2009. These events marked a significant milestone in celebrating and renewing the commitment to cultural exchange and mutual enrichment.

A lighter note in the journey of 'Destiny' occurred during the summer of 2014 when our grandson, Alexander Maas, visited us

. Alexander, only ten at the time, found himself fascinated by the armature of 'Destiny,' which was still assembled in the studio. Under the watchful guidance of his Opa, Geert, Alexander delighted in dismantling the structure, only to ask if it could be reassembled—just so he could take it apart again.

This playful yet profound interaction highlights the tangible connections that art can foster across generations.

In closing, the 'Destiny' sculptures stand as more than mere metal; they are beacons of hope and symbols of the ongoing journey of knowledge and cultural integration. They remind us that education, much like art, is a continuous journey of growth, challenge, and discovery.

The public unveiling of “Destiny” at the Okanagan College Campus in Vernon took place on September 8, 2009, in attendance were delegates from Tachibana University.

The festive unveiling of “Destiny” at Tachibana University in Kyoto, Japan was held on October 24, 2009, in attendance were delegates from Okanagan College.

2010: A Year of Celebrations

2010 began with an honor that deeply touched us both. On March 4th, during the Okanagan Arts Awards 2010, hosted by the Arts Council of the Central Okanagan, Geert was awarded the prestigious "Lifetime Achievement Award for contributions to the arts." This award was presented by Dr. Sharon McCoubrey, President of the Arts Council, in recognition of Geert’s enduring dedication and his innovative spirit in the field of sculpture.

It was a moment of profound pride and reflection on the decades of work and passion Geert has poured into his art. Just a few months later, on May 20th, we reached another significant milestone with the completion of the commissioned MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving) Canada Monument, a Legacy project in the greater Vancouver area, located in Central Park, Burnaby, at the bustling intersection of Kingsway and Boundary Road.

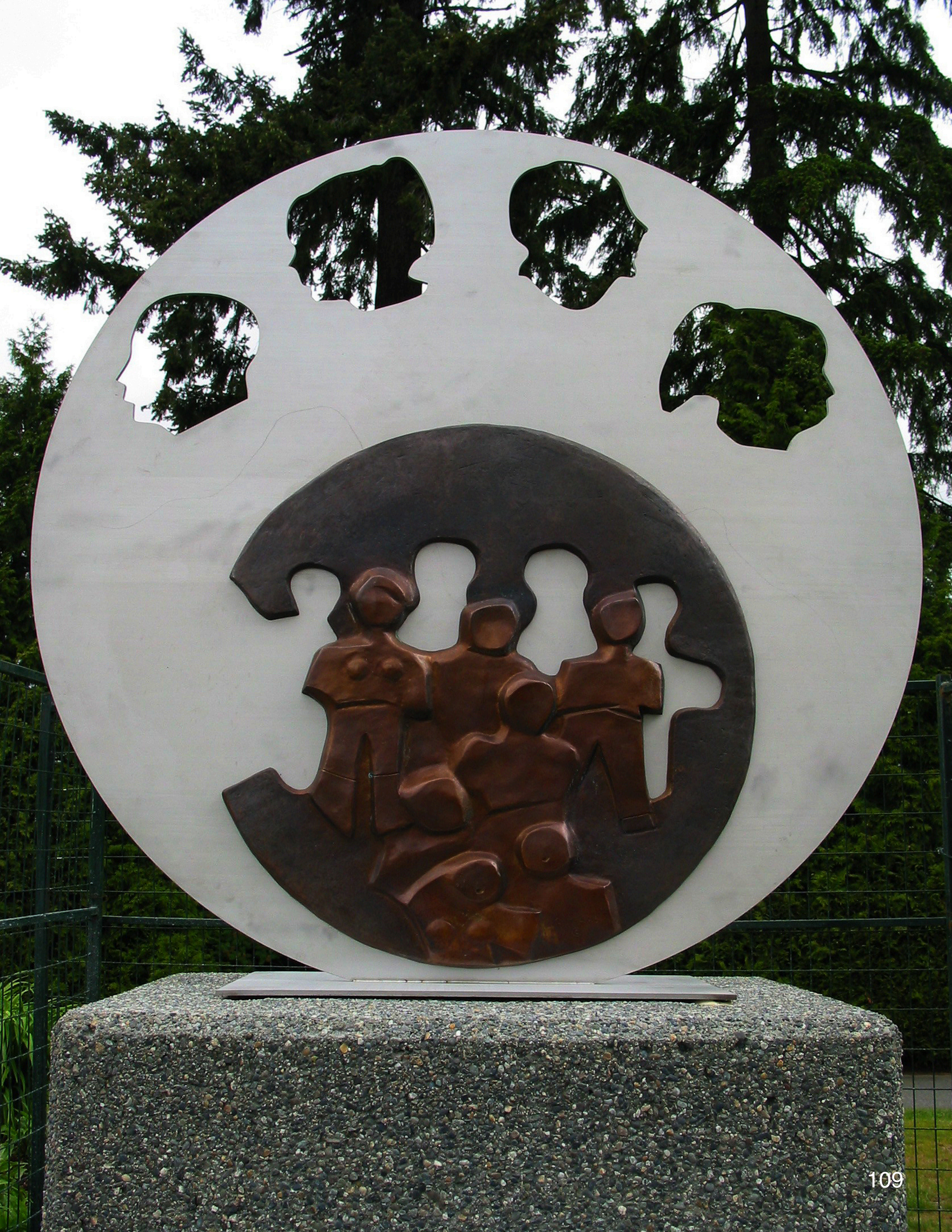
This monument, crafted from bronze and mounted on a stainless steel circle, stands at a total height of 254 cm (8’4½"). It features four silhouette cut-outs representing the loss and the enduring memory of victims of impaired driving. On the opposite side of the monument, their 'positives'—or spirit forms—return, symbolizing ongoing life and remembrance.

This piece is particularly meaningful as it serves not only as a tribute to those lost to impaired driving but also as an educational tool to raise awareness about the dangers of driving under the influence.

Each silhouette tells a story, each one is a reminder of the lives impacted daily by such tragedies across Canada, where, on average, four people die each day due to impaired driving.

2010 was also a year of international engagement. In June, we traveled to Tampere, Finland, to participate in the Art Medal World Congress of FIDEM XXXI. On June 16th, I had the honor of presenting a lecture about the "Spirit of Kelowna" medal project, sharing the intricacies of this community-centered art initiative with an international audience. This project, deeply rooted in local culture and communal identity, was well-received, and it sparked engaging discussions on the role of art in civic pride and memory.

These events from early 2010 reflect not just the achievements of the past but also set the stage for continued artistic pursuits and community engagement, reminding us of the impact and reach of Geert's artistic vision.

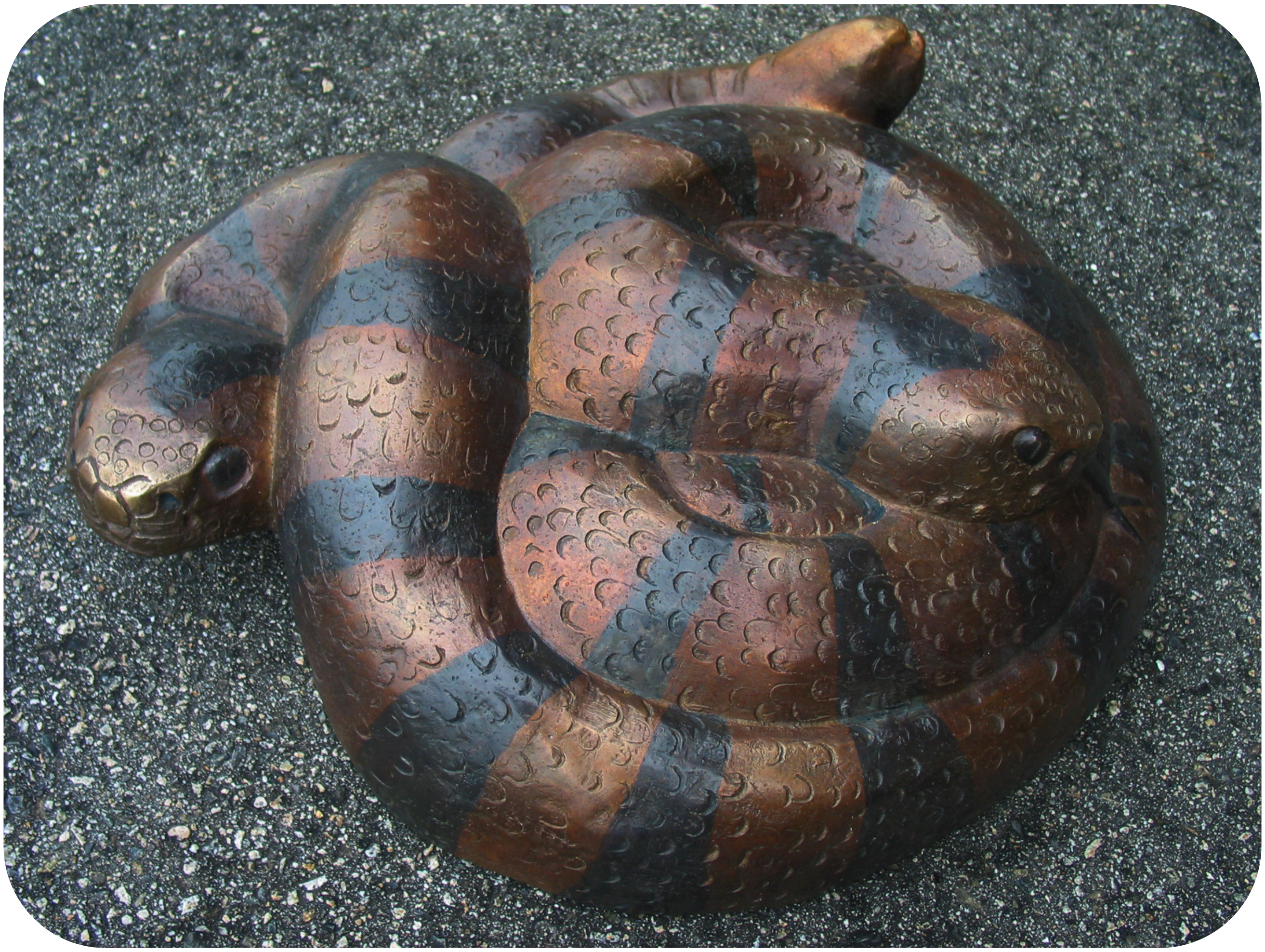


2011: 'Okanagan Eyes, Okanagan Wise, Okanagan-ise'

I'm delighted to recount a special event from the summer of 2011, which highlighted Geert's sculptural prowess and our deep connection to the Okanagan's vibrant art scene.

From June 24th to August 20th, 2011, Geert's striking bronze sculpture, titled "Snakes" 2/7, was featured in a group show at Julie Oakes's Headbones Gallery in Vernon. The exhibition, aptly named "Okanagan Eyes, Okanagan Wise, Okanagan-ise," aimed to capture the essence and spirit of the Okanagan through various artistic expressions and perspectives.

"Snakes," a compelling piece that intertwines the mystique and allure of its namesake creatures, drew significant attention for its intricate detailing and symbolic resonance. The sculpture, part of a limited series, represents a blend of natural form and abstract interpretation, a hallmark of Geert's style that seeks to evoke both curiosity and admiration.



The event itself was a gathering of local connoisseurs and art enthusiasts who were eager to explore and interpret the rich tapestry of works displayed. It was during this exhibition that an art collector, captivated by the dynamic form and underlying themes of “Snakes,” decided to purchase the sculpture. This sale not only signified the appreciation of Geert’s work but also underscored the deep-rooted connection and recognition he has within the Okanagan art community.

The success of "Snakes" at the exhibition is a testament to Geert's ongoing influence and legacy in the regional art scene, where his works continue to inspire and provoke thought among viewers and fellow artists alike. The “Okanagan Eyes, Okanagan Wise, Okanagan-ise” show remains a cherished memory in our gallery’s history, celebrating the unique beauty and vibrant artistic spirit of the Okanagan.

2013-2014: A Journey Through Artistic Expressions

In 2013 and 2014, where Geert's sculptures graced exhibitions across the United States and British Columbia, solidifying his presence in the international art community.

One of the highlights of this period was the inclusion of several of Geert's sculptures in the permanent collection of Big Rock Garden Park in Bellingham, Washington. This beautiful park, known for its serene landscapes and impressive display of sculpture art, became a new home for Geert's works, which are celebrated for their innovative forms and resonant themes.

On May 8th, 2013, we were thrilled to attend the opening of the "Sculpture Northwest" exhibition at Big Rock Garden Park, an event that was hosted by George and Mary Ann Drake, long-time patrons and advocates of the arts.

Their invitation was a testament to their appreciation of Geert's unique artistic vision.
The exhibition itself was a vibrant display of contemporary sculpture, featuring artists from across the region and beyond. Geert's pieces, known for their robust and dynamic forms, stood out, drawing attention and admiration from art enthusiasts and critics alike.

It was a proud moment for us, witnessing his creations becoming a permanent part of this prestigious collection, accessible to the public and contributing to the cultural landscape of Bellingham.

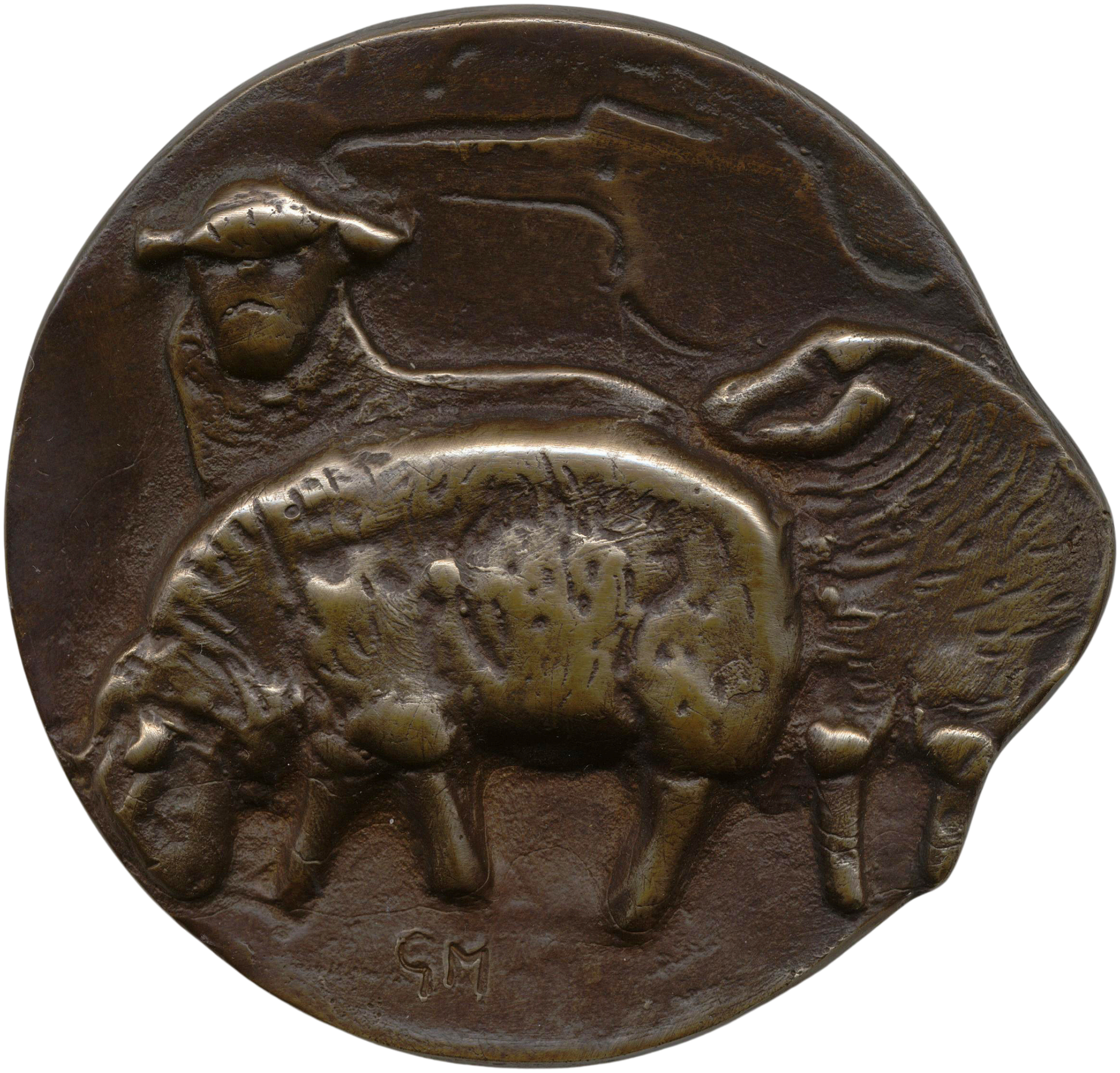
Our participation in various exhibitions not only enhanced Geert's reputation but also allowed us to connect with a wider audience, sharing our passion for sculpture and the stories embedded within each piece. These years were filled with fruitful interactions, learning experiences, and the joy of seeing Geert's sculptures find new homes where they would be appreciated and pondered upon by many.

As we reflect on these enriching years, we are grateful for the opportunities to expand our horizons and bring Geert's sculptures to new venues and audiences, further establishing his legacy in the art world.

2015-2016: The Beauty of Animals

During 2015 and 2016, as Geert participated in the prestigious International Art Medal Competition, themed "The Beauty of Animals.

This competition was an opportunity for Geert to showcase his exceptional talent in medallic art, a discipline that requires meticulous detail and a deep understanding of relief sculpture. His entries were displayed in multiple prestigious venues, starting in the Tongdao Gallery in Beijing, China, and traveling to New York, Shanghai, Shenyang, and Dalian. Geert's medals for this competition were inspired by the grace and inherent beauty of animals, capturing their essence in small, yet profoundly detailed, bronze sculptures. Each piece was a testament to his ability to convey complex emotions and natural beauty within the confined space of a medal, showcasing animals in a manner that highlighted their dignity and elegance.



In New York and across the cities of China, the reaction to Geert's work was overwhelmingly positive. Collectors and fellow artists alike were captivated by his unique approach, which not only celebrated the aesthetic beauty of the animals but also invoked a deeper reflection on our relationship with the natural world.

The tour of his work through these international venues in 2016 was not just a display of artistic mastery but also a platform for cultural exchange and dialogue. It highlighted how art can transcend boundaries, connecting people across different geographies through a shared appreciation of beauty and craftsmanship.

This period was an enriching experience for us, bringing international recognition to Geert's work and allowing us to engage with diverse audiences. It reinforced the universal appeal of his art and its ability to communicate powerful messages through the medium of medals.

2017: A Year of International Artistic Engagement

In 2017, we had the privilege of presenting Geert's work in two distinct cultural landscapes, each rich in artistic heritage and appreciation. In China, Geert's sculptures and medals were part of a broader exhibition aimed at showcasing contemporary international art. The response from the Chinese audience was deeply encouraging; their engagement and appreciation reflected a keen understanding and respect for Geert’s artistic expression, which blends traditional techniques with modern themes.

In Gent and Namur, Belgium, Geert's work was featured in the FIDEM XXXIV exhibitions known for their eclectic mix of classic and contemporary art. These exhibitions allowed us to connect with European art lovers who were particularly intrigued by Geert’s innovative approach to medallic art and sculpture.

The intricate details and profound storytelling captured in each piece spoke to an audience well-versed in the arts, drawing parallels between Geert's style and European artistic traditions.

These international exhibitions were not only opportunities to showcase Geert's work but also moments for us to absorb and learn from diverse artistic influences. Each interaction, whether with fellow artists, curators, or enthusiasts, added layers of depth to our understanding of the global art scene. Accompanying catalogs are profound reminders for participating artists.

2018: A Year of Milestones and Global Connections

The year began with the 2018 FIDEM XXXV Art Medal World Congress held in Ottawa, Canada at the Canadian Museum of Nature, 29 May - June 3. The FIDEM Medal Exhibition there from May 24th till June 29th 2018, embracing the mandatory theme “Women” and “Women in the Natural Sciences”.

This event, one of the most esteemed gatherings in the world of medallic art, brought together artists, collectors, and enthusiasts from across the globe. Geert, as a long-standing participant, showcased several of his latest creations, engaging with an audience that has always been supportive and keenly appreciative of his unique approach to medallic sculpture.

His pieces, known for their intricate designs and profound narratives, received notable attention, reinforcing his stature within the international artistic community.

Later in the year, our journey took us to Japan, where we celebrated the enduring friendship between the cities of Kelowna and Kasugai. October was a particularly memorable month as we attended the annual festival celebrations in Kasugai City.

It was an honor to be present for the unveiling of Geert’s “Circle of Friendship” sculpture on October 20th. This striking stainless steel piece, located in the heart of Kasugai, symbolizes the deep and lasting bond between our communities. The unveiling was a poignant moment, filled with speeches that highlighted the importance of cultural exchange and mutual respect.

The festivities continued the following day with the unveiling of another significant work by Geert, his painting “Stationary Observers,” at Kozoji New Town. This acrylic and lacquer on canvas is a vivid portrayal of timeless vigilance and reflective contemplation. Displayed in a bustling new development, it invites residents and visitors alike to pause and reflect amidst their daily routines.

2019: A Year of Creative Sparks and New Horizons

I'm thrilled to share the highlights of 2019, a year filled with artistic collaboration and international adventure, culminating in a pivotal encounter that expanded our digital footprint. The year kicked off with the "Creative Ignition" group show in Peachland, British Columbia.

This exhibition was a vibrant showcase of local talent, featuring a diverse array of artists whose unique perspectives ignited the regional art scene. Geert's contributions stood out for their intricate details and thought-provoking themes, drawing praise from art lovers and critics alike.

The show not only highlighted Geert's prowess in sculpting but also reaffirmed our commitment to engaging with the local community and supporting regional art initiatives.

As winter turned to spring, we embarked on an extraordinary journey to Castle d'Orquevaux in France as Artists in Residence. This opportunity brought us together with twelve other talented artists from around the globe, selected from hundreds of applicants for their unique artistic disciplines. Our evenings were spent in lively dinners, fostering camaraderie and exchanging ideas that transcended language and culture.

During this residency, Geert dedicated his time to designing three new medals, crafting the intricate molds from clay which he later cast in bronze back home.

Our "open studio time" was a chance to share our artistic process with fellow residents, where I presented a series of photographs detailing the bronze casting process. This was not just an educational exchange but an opportunity to celebrate the diversity of our artistic expressions and share a slice of Canadian culture.

However, our return from France was met with the unfolding global challenge of the COVID pandemic. This dramatic shift in the world scene was a stark contrast to our years of travel and bustling artistic engagements. As the world paused, so did the flux of visitors to our Sculpture Gardens and Gallery.

Yet, it was during this quiet period that we met Lorenz Plourde, a local videographer whose first visit to our studio sparked a fruitful collaboration. Lorenz's keen eye for detail and passion for storytelling through digital media led to the creation of numerous short videos and podcasts that can now be viewed on his YouTube Channel.

His ongoing work on a documentary about our artistic journey promises to bring our sculptures and their stories to a wider audience, ensuring that even in times of global standstill, art finds a way to resonate and inspire. They can be viewed on his website www.processart.ca/geertmaas.

He is still working with us on a documentary and other digital production.

2019 was a year of both celebration and contemplation, marking new ventures and unexpected challenges. Through it all, our spirit of creativity remained undimmed, fueled by the connections we made and the stories we continue to tell through our art.

2020: A Residency to Remember at Castle d'Orquevaux

2020 was a year that brought both unprecedented challenges and incredible opportunities.

Despite the global upheaval, it was a year that saw Geert achieving a significant milestone as an Artist in Residence at the prestigious Castle d'Orquevaux in France. Nestled in the picturesque landscape of the French countryside, Castle d'Orquevaux served as a sanctuary for artists from around the world, offering a serene retreat where creativity could flourish without bounds.

Geert was selected from hundreds of talented applicants, an honor that speaks volumes about his reputation and the impact of his art.
During our time at the castle, the quiet and historically rich surroundings provided Geert with a profound source of inspiration. Surrounded by the lush greenery and the tranquil ambiance of the estate, he delved into new projects that reflected both his deep artistic roots and his ever-evolving techniques.

This residency was not just about creating art; it was about immersing ourselves in a cultural exchange that enriched our understanding of the global art community.

The experience at Castle d'Orquevaux was also a reflective period for us. It allowed Geert to explore new ideas and mediums, pushing the boundaries of his artistic expression.

As an Artist in Residence, Geert also had the opportunity to interact with other artists, sharing insights and forging connections that would last beyond the stay. These interactions, rich in diversity and creativity, were instrumental in shaping the artworks he developed during and after the residency.

Though the world was grappling with the challenges of the pandemic, our time in Castle d'Orquevaux was a testament to the resilience of the human spirit and the unifying power of art. It was a reminder that, even in the most difficult times, art can provide a beacon of hope and a bridge between cultures.

2021: A Year of Expansive Exhibitions – Japan and Ontario

Geert's sculptures and medals had gained considerable attention, and this led to invitations from prestigious galleries and public spaces eager to host his works. In Japan, the exhibitions were set in cultural hubs known for their deep appreciation of both traditional and contemporary art. Geert's pieces were featured alongside local and international artists, providing a fascinating dialogue between different artistic traditions and practices.

His sculptures, known for their robust forms and emotive expressions, resonated deeply with Japanese audiences, who value precision and depth in artistry. The exhibits in Ontario presented a different vibe, one that was intertwined with Canada's diverse artistic landscape. Here, Geert's works were displayed in galleries that celebrated the rich mosaic of Canadian art, from indigenous art forms to modernist expressions.

The Canadian exhibitions in general provided an opportunity for local audiences to engage with Geert's creations, seeing in them reflections of universal themes of heritage, identity, and human emotion.

As 2021 unfolded, it became clear that despite the ongoing global challenges, the appetite for meaningful artistic expression remained strong.

Each exhibition not only showcased Geert's artistic talents but also reinforced the power of art to connect people across different backgrounds and geographies.

We are thankful for the warmth and enthusiasm with which Geert's work was received in both Japan and Ontario. These exhibitions have not only expanded our horizons but have also reinforced our commitment to sharing Geert's artistic vision with a broader audience.

2023: FIDEM XXXVII - Florence, Italy

In 2023 Geert's medals were sent to Florence, Italy as part of FIDEM XXXVII, the International Art Medal Federation's congress. Since Geert and I had spent 9 days in Florence in 2004 we did not attend this congress and medal exhibition now.

The FIDEM biennial event brings together the world's finest medallists. Florence, a city steeped in the legacy of the Renaissance and known for its rich artistic traditions, served as a fitting backdrop for this gathering of contemporary medal artists in 2023.

Geert presented several of his latest medal creations, which reflect his deep commitment to the art form and his continuous exploration of new themes and techniques. His pieces, recognized for their unique blend of modern aesthetics with classical sensibilities, drew the attention of collectors, fellow artists, and historians alike.

One of the highlights for Geert at FIDEM over the years was the opportunity to engage with a community that shares his passion for preserving and innovating in the field of small sculpture.

The exchange of ideas and techniques among peers from diverse cultural backgrounds is immensely enriching.
The FIDEM congresses and exhibitions are a reminder of the global community's appreciation for art medals as a unique form of artistic expression. It underscores the importance of these gatherings in fostering not just artistic development but also international friendships and collaborations.

We are grateful for the recognition of Geert's contributions to the art world, and for the continuing opportunity to represent Canadian art on the international stage. As we look ahead, we are excited about the new projects and opportunities that these interactions have sparked.

2024: Celebrating International Sculpture Day

On April 27th, 2024 we celebrated International Sculpture Day, a worldwide event facilitated by the ISC (International Sculpture Center) www.sculpture.org, an organization where Geert has been an active member for many years.

We opened the doors of the Geert Maas Sculpture Gardens and Gallery to the public, inviting the community of Kelowna and beyond to explore and engage with the world of sculpture.

From 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., around 200 residents visited us, each eager to experience the serene beauty and artistic creativity housed here.

The day was filled with vibrant activities designed to illuminate the intricate processes behind sculpture making. Visitors were treated to live demonstrations by Geert, who shared his techniques and the stories behind some of his most prominent works. It was a fantastic opportunity for art lovers to see the artist in action, adding a layer of understanding and appreciation for the craft.

ADMISSION BY DONATION
NO PHOTOGRAPHY OR FILMING ALLOWED WITHOUT PERMISSION
Come in, we're OPEN
SMALL CARS ONLY PLEASE
GEERT MAAS SCULPTURE GARDENS & GALLERY INC. STUDIO
(250) 860-7012

We also showcased an array of short videos and podcasts, part of an ongoing project to document the extensive body of work Geert has created over the decades. These multimedia presentations provide insights into his artistic journey, highlighting key pieces and the evolution of his style and thematic explorations.

The response from the community was overwhelmingly positive, with many expressing their admiration not only for the art but for the lush, meticulously curated gardens that provide a perfect backdrop for Geert's sculptures. It was a day of learning, inspiration, and community bonding, emphasizing the role of art in bringing people together.

As we continue to develop more videos and podcasts, our aim is to reach an even broader audience, extending an invitation to global visitors to explore Geert's contributions to the art world virtually.

This ongoing project is not just about capturing the visual essence of his work but is also an attempt to preserve his artistic legacy for future generations.

To view www.processart.ca/geertmaas
On Saturday, April 26th, 2025 we will celebrate International Sculpture Day again, open to the public.

Inside the Gallery and Permanent Collection

Welcome to the inner sanctum of creativity, the Geert Maas Art Gallery. Nestled within the first floor of our cherished space, this gallery is not merely a room but a journey through decades of artistic exploration and achievement.

GEERT MAAS ©
SELECTED WORKS: PUBLIC, CORPORATE & PRIVATE COLLECTIONS

As we step into the gallery, the air shifts with the palpable presence of Geert's life's work. Each of the three gallery spaces is meticulously curated to guide visitors through a visual narrative of innovation and mastery.

Here, in this hallowed space, featuring bronze and ceramic sculptures, metals, cast stone, multimedia wall sculptures, medals, paintings, etchings, silkscreens, come together in a symphony of materials. Each artwork stands as a testament to Geert's versatile approach to art, challenging the conventions of form and substance.

Across the room, a showcase displays a myriad of smaller yet equally compelling pieces. The diversity of materials—from the traditional to the unconventional—mirrors Geert's experimental spirit. Each piece, whether it's a delicate wall sculpture or a robust bronze figure, carries a fragment of the artist's vast imaginative realm.

To truly understand the depth of Geert's work, one must appreciate the layers of his creativity. From initial sketches to the final strokes of the brush or the last adjustments in the foundry, each step in the creation process is a blend of meticulous planning and spontaneous artistic impulse.

As we conclude our tour of the gallery, we leave with a heightened appreciation for the art of sculpture and the artist behind these creations.

This gallery, a sanctum of artistic endeavor, stands as a beacon of inspiration, not just for those who seek beauty but for those who see the profound impact of a life dedicated to art.

GEERT MAAS
THANK YOU for your DONATION

GEERT MAAS

WASHROOMS
GEERT MAAS

Our permanent collection is an exclusive assembly of sold-out limited edition bronze sculptures, each piece a narrative in itself, preserved in time and not for sale. These sculptures, ranging from petite maquettes to skillfully scaled models, represent a significant part of our artistic legacy and are proudly displayed for public appreciation.

Among the earliest pieces in this collection are those first showcased in Canada during the 1982 exhibition 'Recent Sculpture by Geert Maas' held at the Penticton Public Art Gallery. This pivotal show featured foundational works such as 'Adam and Eve,' 'The Kiss,' 'Mother Earth,' 'Reclining,' and several stoneware originals that were later cast in bronze.

Walking through the gallery, you encounter a myriad of stories encapsulated in bronze. Take 'Amor,' also known as 'Two Figures,' a limited edition series where only twelve were ever made. Or 'Community In Motion,' another notable sculpture with its large presence gracing Riverfront Park in Kamloops as the first of four editions, while the second stands here, in the tranquil confines of our gardens.

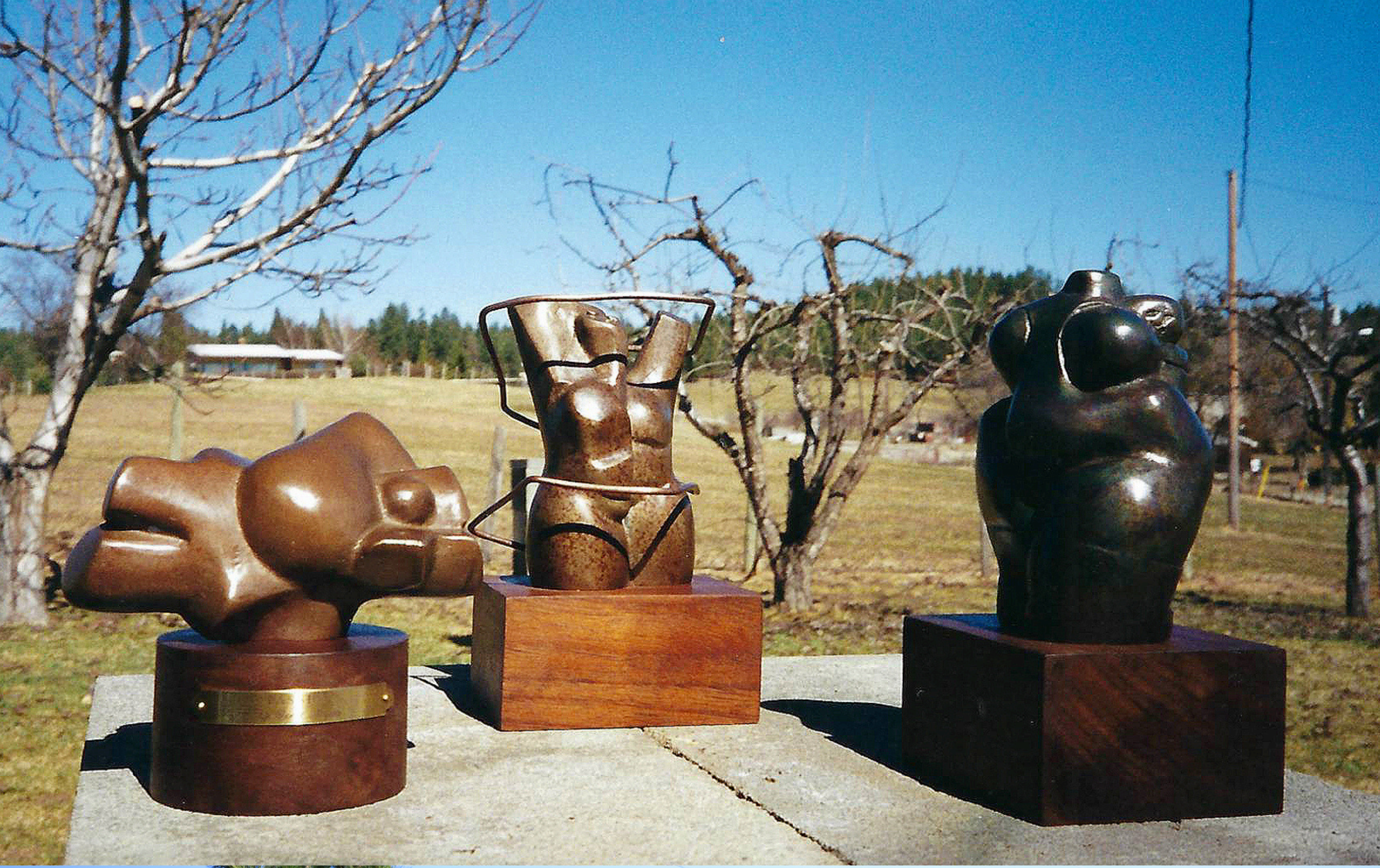
Then there's 'Destiny,' a dramatic piece that not only enhances our permanent collection but also stands majestically at Okanagan College in Vernon, reaching a towering height of 2.72 meters including the base. Its duplicate, weighing 131 pounds, finds its home far across the ocean at Tachibana University in Kyoto, Japan, symbolizing a twenty-year student exchange program anniversary.

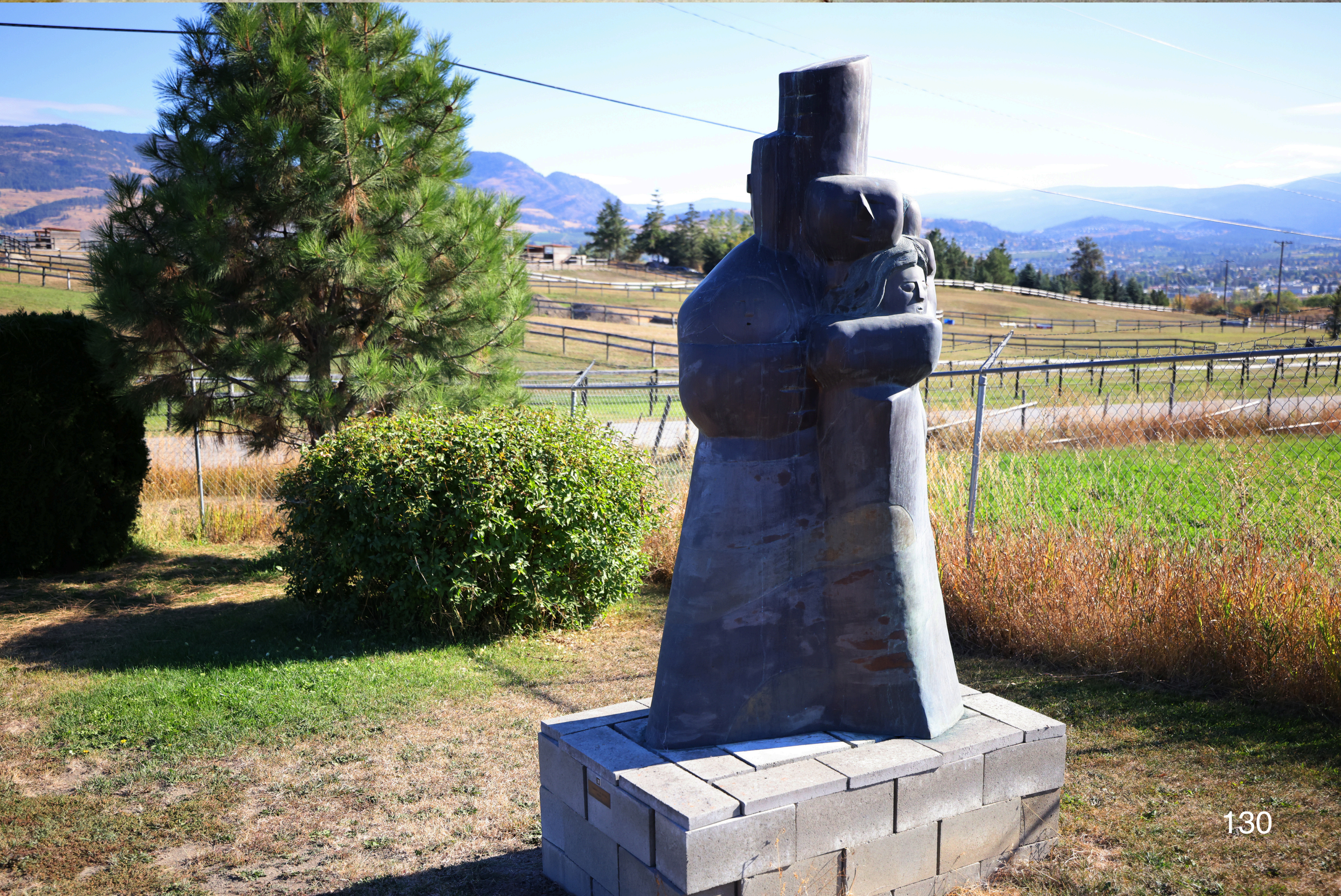
'Moulin Rouge,' initially a smaller figure, evolved into a key element within the 'Goddesses of the Universe,' a multimedia installation that brings together various art forms in our sculpture garden.

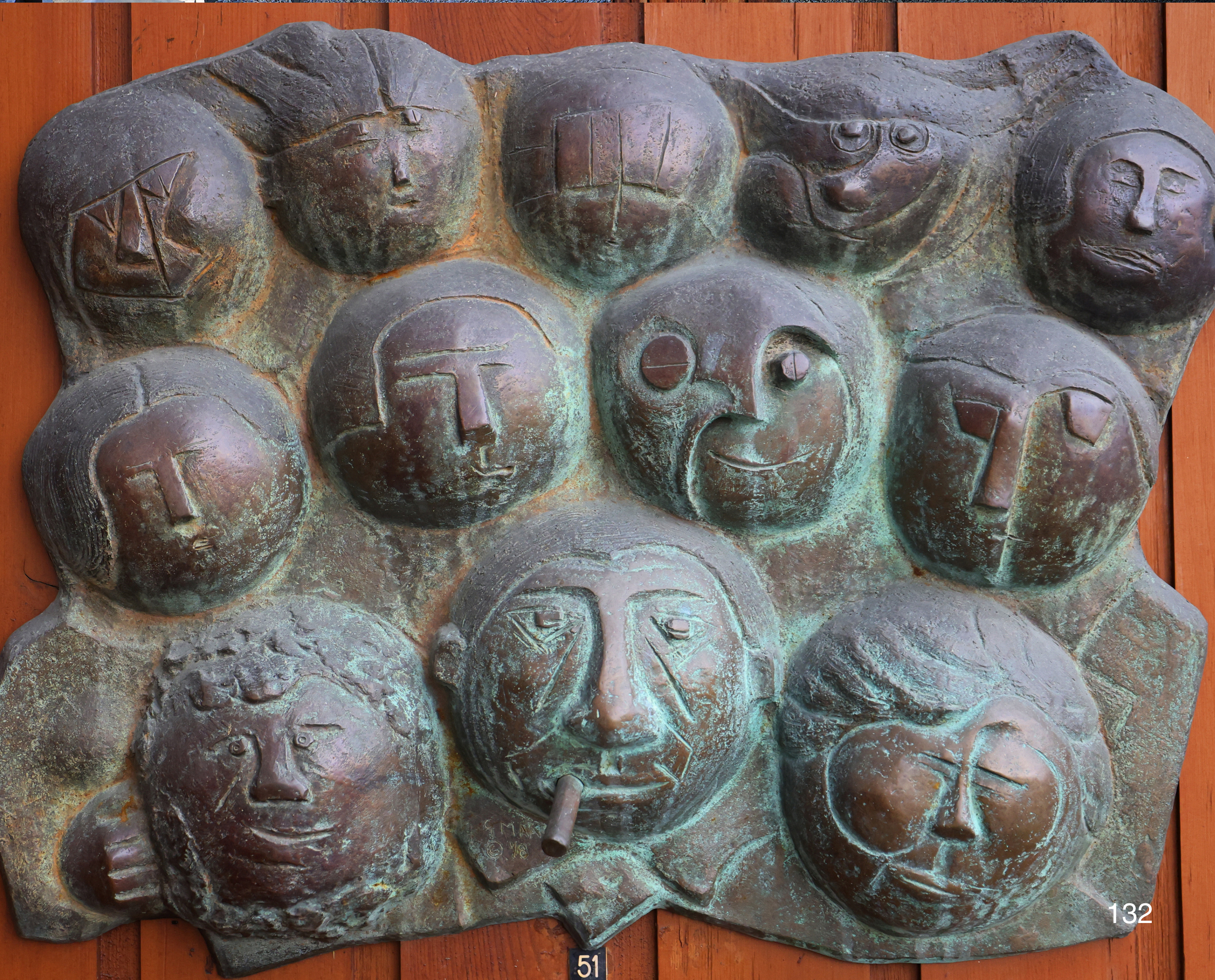
And not to overlook 'Freedom,' a small maquette in our collection that has seen its larger counterpart, 'The Joy of Freedom,' celebrated in downtown Vancouver's Robson Square, with other editions residing in private collections and public spaces, narrating stories of liberty and artistic expression.

Each sculpture in our permanent collection not only marks milestones in Geert's artistic career but also serves as an enduring inspiration for visitors and artists alike. These pieces, fixed in time and space, continue to speak to the hearts of those who wander through our gardens, inviting all to delve deeper into the narrative layers of each bronze figure.

16
HORSE AND KNIGHT
BRONZE






51

CURRICULUM VITAE

1944 Born in The Netherlands in 1979, Immigrated to Canada

DISCIPLINES

Sculptures and installations in various media, reliefs, medals, paintings and etchings

EDUCATION

1975 Applied Art Teaching Diploma
1970 Drawing/Painting Teaching Diploma
Kijkduin Academy, The Hague
1967-1969 Academy of Art, (Vrije Academie) The Hague
Specialising in sculpture, ceramics, model drawing and painting
1961-1968 Peter Kanis Academy, Nijmegen
Graduated as a teacher with principal's qualifications and honours in art history
1961 De Olde Kruijk Ceramic Studio

SELECTED COMMISSIONS & COLLECTIONS (Public and Corporate Only)

City of Burnaby, Canada
City of Kamloops, Canada
City of Kasugai, Japan
City of Kelowna, Canada (2008-2007, 2002, 1997)
City of The Hague, The Netherlands
City of Vancouver, Canada
University Museum, Bergen, Norway
Kyoto Tachibana University, Japan
National Museum "Staatliche Kunstsammlungen", Dresden, Germany
Muzeum Sztuki Medalierskiej, Wroclaw, Poland
Western Washington University Library, Bellingham, WA, U.S.A.
Museum Beelden aan Zee, Scheveningen, The Netherlands

Simon Fraser University, Burnaby/Vancouver, Canada
Okanagan College, Vernon, BC
Association of Interior Realtors, British Columbia, Canada
British Columbia Museums Association, Canada
Theatre BC, Mainstage, Province of British Columbia, Canada
Pay Works, Winnipeg, Canada
Okanagan Science & Technology Council, Canada
7505 Realty & Development Corporation, Manila, Philippines
Central Okanagan Hospice, Kelowna BC
District of Lake Country, British Columbia, Canada
Holiday Park Developments Ltd. Kelowna, BC Canada
Gardens of Art, Bellingham, WA, U.S.A.
Doheny Publications Inc., Seattle, WA, U.S.A.
CP Hotels The Coast Hotels Delta Properties Corporation, Edmonton, AB
Dairy & Heritage Museum, Ontario
Kelowna Chamber of Commerce, BC
Kelowna Public Art Gallery, BC
KPMG
Medical Center, Osoyoos, BC
Prince George Public Art Gallery, BC
Sculptor's Society of Canada
Gallery Telpaz Inc., Ottawa
Lifespace Holdings Ltd., Oyama, BC
AB-Consult, The Netherlands
New Ron Holdings Ltd., Calgary, AB
Arpeg Holdings Ltd., Vancouver
Ranleigh Consulting & Management Services Inc., Toronto
The Coast Capri Hotel, Kelowna
Quantech Software.com Inc., Canada
Legato Centre, Kelowna, BC
TSI Calgary, AB
Dutch Canadians Society, Vancouver
Oxford Properties Group - Orchard Park, Kelowna, BC
MADD Canada - Mothers Against Drunk Driving
YMCA-YWCA Kelowna, B.C.

Represented in prestigious public, corporate and private collections in many countries including Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Mexico, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, The U.S.A.

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

2025 International Sculpture Day - Open House Sale and Exhibition, Ongoing Project Geert Maas Short Videos and Podcasts https://processart.ca/geertmaas

2025-1986 Geert Maas Art Exhibitions, with various titles, Geert Maas Sculpture Gardens and Gallery, Kelowna, BC,
FIDEM XXXVI, State Antique Collection (Antiken Sammlung), Munich, Germany

2024 Myths, Fables & Fairytales, RCA, Rotary Centre for the Arts, Kelowna, B.C,
2023 FIDEM XXXVII, Bibliotec National de Firenze, Florence, Italy
2021 Algonquin Art Centre Exhibit, Ontario
2021-2020 FIDEM XXXVI, Tokyo, Japan

2019 Creative Ignition, Group Show, September 27-28 Peachland Visitor Centre, Peachland, BC

2018 FIDEM XXXV, Canadian Museum of Nature, Ottawa, Canada
The Medallic Art Society of Canada Members Exhibit 2018, Ottawa School of Art Gallery, Ottawa, Canada

2017 International Coin and Medal Art Exhibition, China Numismatic Museum, Beijing and China National Convention Centre, Shanghai,
THE 150 - Canadian Celebration Exhibit Sequicentennial Anniversary of Confederation, Canadian Sculpture Centre, Toronto, Ontario

2017/2016 FIDEM XXXIV, Provincial Museum of Ancient Arts, Namur, Belgium
The Beauty of Animals, Medialia...Rack and Hamper Gallery, New York, USA
MASC The Great War Exhibition, Fort York Visitors Centre, Toronto, Ontario

2016/2015 International Art Medal Competition The Beauty of Animals, Tongdao Gallery, Beijing, China & New York, Beijing, Shanghai, Shenyang and Dalian

2014 FIDEM XXXIII, Sophia, Bulgaria
Westside Culture Days, West Kelowna, BC

2013 Sculpture Northwest, Big Rock Garden Park, Bellingham, WA, USA
Bellevue Arts Museum, Bellevue, WA, USA
Okanicon Iconagan, Headbones Gallery, Vernon, BC

2012 FIDEM XXXII, University of Glasgow, Scotland
MASC & Niagara 1812 Bicentennial Legacy Council Exhibition,
Rodman Hall Art Centre and Gallery Brock University, St.Catharines, Ontario
Headbones Gallery, Vernon, BC

2011 Medallic Art Society of Canada Exhibition, Rodman Hall Art Centre and Gallery
Brock University, St.Catharines, Ontario
The Art Medal: Past and Present, Brookgreen Gardens, Myrtle Beach, SC, USA
Okanagan Eyes Okanagan Wise Okanagan-ise, Headbones Gallery, Vernon, BC

2010 FIDEM XXXI, Tampere Art Museum, Finland

2009 MASC, Glen Williams Gallery, Ontario
Gardiner Museum of Ceramic Art, Toronto

2008 The Best of MASC, Medallic Art Society of Canada,
Geert Maas Sculpture Gardens and Gallery, Kelowna, BC

2007 Historical Museum and Park, Birmingham, MI, USA
30th Fédération Internationale de la Médaille Colorado Springs, USA
Burnaby Art Gallery, Burnaby, BC
BC Life and Arts Festival, Kelowna, BC

2006 Biennial Bellevue Sculpture Exhibition, Bellevue, WA, USA
West Vancouver Memorial Library, Vancouver, BC
Pendulum Gallery, Vancouver, BC
Van Dusen Gardens, Vancouver, BC

2006-2005 Padded Cell Gallery, Royal Oak, Michigan, USA

2006-2002 Summer Exhibitions, The Barn Gallery, Oyama, BC

2006-1999 Artwalk, Winfield, District of Lake Country,BC

2005 Forest Lawn Museum, Glendale, CA, USA
Legacies Through Time Sculptors' Society of British Columbia
Alumni Surrey Public Art Gallery, Surrey, BC

2004 Nordic Heritage Museum, Seattle, WA
FIDEM XXIX, Seixal, Portugal
The Sculptors' Society of B.C.,
Vancouver Public Library, The Moat Gallery
Fire and Rebirth, The Art Ark, Kelowna, BC
Search for Essential Elements, North Vancouver Arts Council

2003 75th Anniversary Juried Exhibition, Sculptors Society of Canada,
John B. Aird Gallery, Toronto

2002 XXVIII FIDEM, Musee de la Monnaie, Paris, France
MASC, Canadian War Museum, Ottawa
International Sculpture Symposium, Okanagan Thompson, BC
Okanagan Sculptors and Photographers,
The Art Ark, Kelowna, BC
Gallery Telpaz Artists, Ottawa

2001 Public Expression - The Maquette, Canadian Sculpture Centre, Toronto
Geert Maas, Kelowna Community Theatre, Kelowna, BC
The Creative Voice: Life and Art in the Okanagan,
Art Gallery of the South Okanagan, Penticton, BC
Erotic Figure Show,The Barn Gallery, Oyama, BC
The Heat, The Art Ark, Kelowna, BC

2000 Geert Maas, Simon Fraser University Gallery, Burnaby BC
Geert Maas, The Teck Gallery, Simon Fraser University at Harbour Centre, Vancouver
XXVII FIDEM, Goethe National Museum, Weimar, Germany
Canadian Numismatic Association Convention, Ottawa
Toronto International Art Fair, TIAF, Toronto
Exotic Erotic, Headbones Gallery, Vernon, BC

1999 Passion and Vision:The Work of Geert Maas, Retrospective Exhibition, Kelowna Public Art Gallery, BC
Geert Maas, Gallery Telpaz, Ottawa

1998 Geert Maas, Art International New York, Jacob K. Javits Convention Center, NY
XXVI FIDEM, Museum Beelden aan Zee, Scheveningen, The Netherlands
Geert Maas-Sculptures in Bronze and Stoneware, Headbones Gallery, Vernon, BC
ART 98, International Contemporary Art Exhibition, Vancouver
1998/1997/1996 Artwalk, (Featured Artist) Holiday Park Resort, Kelowna, BC

1997 ART 97, International Contemporary Art Exhibition, Vancouver

1996 La Fédération Internationale de la Médaille Exhibition, Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, Neuchâtel, Switzerland
XII Biennale Internazionale Del Bronzetto Dantesco, Ravenna, Italy
Geert Maas 2D and 3D, Vernon Public Art Gallery at Silver Star, Vernon, BC
Land Biography...Pa(y)ssages of the Okanagan, Public Art Gallery, Kelowna, BC

1995 Geert Maas: Explorations, City Hall, Kasugai, Japan

1994 Geert Maas: Multimedia, Devonian Gardens, Calgary, AB
Geert Maas: Multimedia, Canadian Sculpture Centre, First Canadian Place, Toronto

1993 Transformations, Public Art Gallery, Richmond, BC

1992 X Biennale Internazionale Dantesca Di Ravenna, Centro Dantesco, Ravenna, Italy
La Fédération Internationale de la Médaille Exhibition, British Museum, London, England

1991 The Holiday Season, John Black Aird Gallery, Toronto

1990 Art Vancouver, Robson Square Conference Centre, Vancouver
XXII F.I.D.E.M., Helsinki City Art Museum, Helsingin Taidemuseo, Helsinki, Finland

1989 Sculpture British Columbia, Touring Exhibit, Public Art Galleries: Dawson Creek, Prince George, Vernon, Kelowna, Penticton, BC

1988 S.S.C. 60th Anniversary Exhibition, John Black Aird Gallery, Toronto
Inaugural Show, Gardens of Art, Bellingham, Washington, U.S.A.
VIII Biennale Internazionale Dantesca Di Ravenna, Ravenna, Italy

1987 7th International Small Sculpture Exhibition, National Museum of Hungary (Mücsarnok Palace of Exhibitions) Budapest, Hungary
Expressions in 3D, John Black Aird Gallery, Toronto
Erotica the 4th Annual, Saskatchewan Cultural Exchange Society, Regina
Geert Maas, KADAC Exhibition, Kelowna, BC
1987/1986 Diversity: an international exhibition of sculpture, Touring Exhibit, Galleries in Washington State, U.S.A.
1987/1986/1985 Sculpture Show, Robson Square Media Centre, Vancouver

1986 Kortárs Kanadai Kisplasztika, Ernst Muzeum, Budapest, Hungary
Sculpture Show, Salt of the Earth Gallery, Vancouver
On the Beach, Public Art Gallery, Kelowna, BC
Geert Maas, Panorama Resort, Invermere, BC
Art - 4 Way Traffic, Geert Maas Sculpture Gardens and Gallery, Kelowna, BC

1985 Geert Maas Sculpture, Public Art Gallery, Richmond, BC
Geert Maas, Public Art Gallery, Prince George, BC

1984 Geert Maas Sculptures, Public Art Gallery, Vernon, BC
Harvest of the Arts, Community Skills Gallery, Kelowna, BC
Kelowna Favourites, Public Art Gallery, Kelowna, BC

1983 Geert Maas Sculptures, Public Art Gallery, Kamloops, BC

1982 Geert Maas Bronze Sculptor, Public Art Gallery, Kelowna, BC
Geert Maas Recent Sculpture, Public Art Gallery, Penticton, BC

1979 Expositie Geert Maas, Medisch Centrum, Meerlo, The Netherlands

1977 Kunsthuis Breda, Grote Kerk, Breda, The Netherlands

1974 Geert Maas Multimedia, Geert Maas Sculpture Gardens & Gallery, Swolgen, The Netherlands

1969 Geert Maas Plastieken, Kijkduin Academie, The Hague, The Netherlands

1967 Academie Tentoonstelling, ANWB Gebouw, The Hague, The Netherlands

RELATED ACTIVITIES

Canadian Delegate / Participant
Chateau d'Orquevaux, France: Artist-in-Residence (2020)
"XXVII FIDEM" Congress: Weimar, Germany (2000)
"Sculpture Parks and Gardens Conference" International Sculpture Center, New Jersey, U.S.A. (1999) "XXVI FIDEM" Congress: The Hague, The Netherlands (1998)

Co-ordinator / Participant
"The Best of MASC" International Medal Exhibition, Kelowna, BC (2008)
"ART 98" & "ART 97" International Contemporary Art Exhibition, Vancouver
"ART - 4 Way Traffic" Kelowna, BC (1986)

Leader / Instructor / Lecturer Lecture

"Spirit of Kelowna," FIDEM XXXI, Congress: Tampere , Finland (2010)
Business of Arts & Culture Forum, Kelowna, BC (2009)
Lecture at the Okanagan Jewish Community Centre, Kelowna, BC (2007)
Hands-on Medallic Sculpture Workshops, Kelowna, BC (2007-2006)
Sculptors' Association of Alberta, Edmonton, Speaker (2006)
Lecture "How independence, diversity and quality in art contribute to optimism" Simon Fraser University at Harbour Centre, Vancouver (2000)
Lecture "The Work of Geert Maas," Okanagan University College, Kelowna, BC (1999)
Lectures "Passion and Vision: The Work of Geert Maas," Kelowna Public Art Gallery (1999)
Lecture "Art Analysis," Kelowna and District Arts Council (1999)
Seminar "Sculpture Analysis," at "ART 98" Vancouver
Seminar "Contemporary Canadian Sculpture," at "ART 97" Vancouver
Hands-on Workshop/Seminar "Thompson Valley Potters Guild" Kamloops, BC (1997)
Hands-on Workshop/Seminar "Kamloops & District Teachers Association," Kamloops, BC (1995)
Seminar, Sculptor's Society of Canada, Toronto (1994)
Workshop and Seminar "Festival of the Midnight Sun," Yellowknife, NWT (1993)
Lectures/Seminars "Great Northern Arts Festival," Inuvik, NWT (1993)
Sculpture Workshop, Kelowna School of the Arts, Kelowna, BC (1991)
Seminars, Public Art Galleries: Dawson Creek, Prince George, Vernon, Kelowna, Penticton, BC (1989)
Sculpture Workshop: Brevard Art Center & Museum, Melbourne, Fl, U.S.A. (1989)
Hands-on Workshop/Seminar "BC Festival of the Arts," Penticton, BC (1984)

Adjudicator / Curator and Project Leader

Okanagan Camera Clubs, Photo Exhibition (2003)
School District #23, Drawing Competition Japan Festival, Kelowna, BC (2002)
Thompson Okanagan Network of Arts Councils (TONAC), Kelowna, BC (2001)
Sand Castle Competition, Kelowna, BC (2001, 1999)
"Okanagan Mainline Regional Arts Council" (OMRAC) Exhibition, Kamloops, BC (1997)
"BC Wine Label Awards," The Wine Museum, Kelowna, BC (1995)
Visual Art Project, Canada Summer Games, Kamloops, BC (1993)
"Sculpture British Columbia," Sculptor's Society of British Columbia Travelling Exhibition (1989)
"Shushwap Lake Festival of the Arts," Sorrento, BC (1988)
"Images and Objects," BC Festival of the Arts, Cranbrook, BC (1987)
"Okanagan Valley Jury Show," Kamloops, BC (1983)
Drawing and Painting Competition, Scholen Swolgen, The Netherlands (1977)
Multimedia Competition, School District Meerlo-Wanssum, The Netherlands (1975)

SELECTED PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

International Sculpture Center, U.S.A.
Sculptor's Society of Canada
FIDEM - La Fédération Internationale de la Médaille
MASC - Medallic Art Society of Canada, Founding Member & Director
AMSA - American Medallic Sculpture Association
SSBC - Sculptor's Society of British Columbia
CARFAC Canadian Artists' Representation Le Front des Artistes Canadiens
Okanagan Science & Technology Council
British Columbia Museums Association

AWARD

Okanagan Lifetime Achievement Arts Award 2010

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

"GEERT MAAS Member Showcase" Spring/Summer 2024. Issue 63, pages 2 to 5. Behind the MASC - Newsletter of the Medallic Art Society of Canada
"Chateau d'Orquevaux, Members Exchange, The American Medallic Sculpture Association", 2020, Vol. 39 Issue 2, Page 13
"Local artist goes to France", The Okanagan Weekend, Life and Arts, June 2020
"Peachland welcoming top artists", The Daily Courier, September 4, 2019
"Sculpture unveiling in Kasugai",The Daily Courier, November 2018
FIDEM XXXV 2018 Art Medal World Congress & Exhibition, Ottawa, Canada, Canadian Museum of Nature
International Coin and Medal Art, Beijing, China 2017
FIDEM XXXIV 2016 Art Medal World Congress & Exhibition, Gent-Namur, Belgium
"De Beeldenaar" 2011-6-271 Boekbespreking, Karel Soudijn
"Feature Artist" Carfac BC 2011
"Okanagan Eyes Okanagan Wise Okanagan-Ise" Headbones Gallery 2011
"Maas Monument for MADD" AMSA Members Exchange, April May June 2011
"Quest Canadien ULYSSE" 6th edition
"Spirit of Kelowna" Medal Project, Medailles 2010
"Latest work hits close to home for sculptor" The Okanagan Sunday 2010
"Maas sculpture, medals installed in Japan, Canada - 'Destiny' medals, sculpture honor global education" AMSA Members Exchange Spring 2010
"Okanagan artists recognized with awards" Capital News 2010
"Public ART in Vancouver" 2009
"YLW Connection" Fall 2009
"The Medal" Spring 2009 "AMSA" Members Exchange Summer 2009
"The Spirituality of Music" 2008
"The Best of MASC" 2008
"The Spirit of Kelowna - A Celebration of Art & Community" 2008
The Art of Community Spirit" Okanagan Arts 2008
"Ancestry" Tourism Kelowna Visitors' Guide 2008
The Simon Fraser University Collection, Public Art, A Walking Tour 2007

FIDEM XXX Art Medal World Congress & Exhibition, USA 2007
www.bcartnews.com Feature & Interview by Michael A. Jones 2007
American Medallic Sculpture Association presents The Fine Art of Medals, Birmingham Historical Museum & Park 2007
Bellevue Sculpture Exhibition 2006, City of Bellevue, WA, USA
Public Art City of Kelowna 2006
"Kelowna Centennial Time Capsule" behind the MASC 2006
Geert Maas "Making the Museums In Motion Award," British Columbia Museums Association, Museums roundup 2005
"The Democracy of Public Sculpture" Mosaic Arts Magazine 2005
"Beyond Two Dimensions: The Fine Art of Medals" Forest Lawn Museum 2005
"Valley's 50 most influential" Okanagan Life 2005
"Mainstage 2005 Thespian and other Award Winners" Theatre BC News 2005
"B.C. regiments to receive commemorative plaque from Dutch Canadians" the Windmill Herald 2005
"Two Decades of Bronze: Geert Maas", Galleries West 2004
"Art on Maas" eVent -Maas on Mass- 2004
"Geert Maas Goddesses-Ancestors-Sunbathers - A Two-Decade Journey" behind the MASC 2004
"Geert and Elly Maas celebrate 20 years since the beginning of their studio, gallery and sculpture garden" American Medallic Sculpture Association 2004
"Of stone, wood, clay, Goddesses, Ancestors, & Sunbathers - Sculptor Geert Maas celebrates a 20 year journey" Okanagan Life 2004
Capital News: 101 things to do in the Central Okanagan 2005, 2004
"Maquette Sculptures of 2003 China Changchun International Sculpture Symposium"
"Medailles" Catalogue 2003
"MASC" Catalogue 2002-2003
"FIDEM 2002" Catalogue
"ESPACE sculpture" 2002
"Goddesses of the Universe" The Sacramento Bee 2002
"Okanagan Valley is an unexpected Canadian delight" The Express Times 2002
"MAAS-TERPIECES" The Edmonton Sun 2002
"Rock my world!" Westjet Airlines Magazine 2002
"Inspired art" Maas Appeal, Showcase 2002

"Community In Motion" The Daily News Kamloops 2002
"On The Beach" Capital News 2002
Fine Art Ceramics "New Ideas Public Art and Your Studio" 2002
"Goddesses of the Universe" The Okanagan Saturday 2002
Magazin'Art "A Legend in our Time" 2002
"Featured Medallist: Geert Maas" behind the MASC 2002
"Kelowna: From wine to the culture" The Province 2002
"Building Communities" Lake Country Chamber of Commerce 2002-2003 Telephone & Business Directory
Calendar 2002 - Simon Fraser Galleries, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, BC
"GEERT MAAS Artist in Bronze" Louise Levergneux 2001
"ISC Web Special #4", International Sculpture Center, U.S.A., www.sculpture.org, 2001
"Geert Maas is one of Kelowna's cultural treasures" Seattle Post-Intelligencer 2001
"Circle of Friendship" Okanagan Life 2001
Catalogue GEERT MAAS, Simon Fraser University Galleries 2000
XXVII FIDEM 2000 Internationale Medaillenkunst, 2000 Berlin/Weimar
"Bronze Works" Piano Composition by A.D. Perry 2000
Calendar 2000 - Simon Fraser Galleries, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, BC
Beautiful British Columbia Traveller / Summer 2000
"Hidden Okanagan" British Columbia Hidden 2000
"Physician's monument" Osoyoos Times 2000
Catalogue "Passion and Vision: The Work of GEERT MAAS" 1999
Passion by Geert Maas, The Ottawa Citizen 1999
City of Vancouver Public Art Walks Downtown Core 1999
art beat - The passion and vision of Geert Maas - Okanagan Life 1999
Art for the Maases - Showcase 1999
"The life of an artist" The Daily Courier 1999
Kelowna and District Arts Council Newsletters 1999
"Garden showcases sculpture" The Daily Courier 1999
"Geert Maas display at ArtWalk" The Calendar 1999
Plump & warped" The Daily Courier 1999
"Modern Art Medals" The Netherlands 1998
"ART International New York 1998"
"ART 98 Vancouver International Fair" 1998

""A Century of Sculpture" Sculptors' Society of British Columbia 1998

The Creative Voice: Life and Art in the Okanagan" 1998

"A bronze work at the Geert Maas studio" The Edmonton Journal 1998

"Okanagan" The Province 1998

"Work of Art Honours Mainstage Winners" Theatre BC News 1997

"Vancouver International Art 97 Exhibition"

"FIDEM 1996" Centro Dantesco, Ravenna, Italy

"Sculpture Parks & Gardens Directory" The International Sculpture Center 1996

"Dutch-Canadian monument finds down-town site" Vancouver 1996

"Art and Soul of the Interior" Vancouver Sun 1995

"Puzzle Piece Variations" in "Visit Our Gallery" Sculptor's Society of Canada

Geert Maas Sculpture Gardens "Discover Kelowna" Tourism Kelowna

GIO Globetrotter, Japanese 1994-1995

AAA/CAA Tourbook 1994-2019

Dumont richtig reisen Kanada British Columbia Geert Maas' Skulpturengarten in Kelowna, Okanagan 1999-2019

FODOR'S Canada 1992-2019

Frommer's 1st Edition British Columbia & the Canadian Rockies 2000

Sculptor's Society of Canada 65th Anniversary, Mosaic Press 1993

The Richmond Art Gallery, Geert Maas "Transformations" 1993

"In the Round: Contemporary art medals of the world: FIDEM XXIII" British Museum, London, England 1992

"X Biennale Internazionale Del Bronzetto Dantesco" Ravenna, Italy 1992

"Art Is A Fulltime Profession For Sculptor" Okanagan Sunday & Canadian Press 1991

"Sculpting in the ROUND" CANADIAN/Time Air 1991

"Catalogue : FIDEM XXII" Helsinki, Finland 1990

"Sculptures by Geert Maas: Humanity in Well-Rounded Forms" ESPACE 1989

"Sculpture British Columbia" Sculptor's Society of British Columbia 1989

"VIII Biennale Internazionale Del Bronzetto Dantesco" Ravenna, Italy 1988

"Challenge and Tradition: SSC anniversary exhibition" Sculptor's Society of Canada, Toronto 1988

Calendar Kelowna & District Arts Council 1988

Canwood the okanagan collection 1988

"Budapesti Nemzetközi Kisplasztikai Kiállítás Mücsarnok Palace of Exhibitions - National Museum of Hungary" Budapest, Hungary 1987
"Expressions in 3d" Sculptor's Society of Canada 1987
"Sculpture '87" Sculptor's Society of British Columbia
"Diversity: an international exhibition of sculpture" North Central Washington Museum, U.S.A. 1986
"Kortárs Kanadai Kisplasztika" Ernst Muzeum, Budapest, Hungary 1986
"Kelowna Favourites" Kelowna Public Art Gallery 1984
"Volumes of Humanity: the Sculpture of Geert Maas" ARTSWEST 1983
"Geert Maas Kelowna Bronze Sculptor" Kelowna Public Art Gallery 1982
"Geert Maas Sculptures" Kelowna 1981 "Catalogus Kunsthuis Breda" The Netherlands 1977

SELECTED DOCUMENTARIES, TELEVISION AND RADIO APPEARANCES

Documentaries : "Community In Motion" by Geert Maas, Joyce & Bill De Meester, Kelowna, BC 2003-2002
"A Documentary Featuring Geert Maas" Center of Art & Technology, Kelowna, BC 2003
"Geert Maas International Artist" People of Vision - CHBC TV 2000
"Ancestry" A Profile of Geert Maas,Tripod Film & Video Productions, Kelowna, BC 2000
"Passion and Vision: The Work of Geert Maas", Plugged In - Shaw Television, Regional 1999
"Geert Maas - Passion & Vision" Kelowna Art Gallery,Tripod Film & Video Productions, Kelowna, BC 1999
Geert Maas Sculpture Gardens and Gallery, Special Places in British Columbia: BCTV - TV for BC Tour 1997
"Geert Maas at Culture Showcase" Shaw Television: Kelowna, Vernon, Penticton 1997
"Joy of Freedom" Liberation Monument, CHBC TV 1995 "Geert Maas Recent Works" CHBC TV 1992
"Geert Maas showing his Sculpture Gardens, Gallery and Studio in Kelowna" SHAW Television, Penticton 1992 "The Guard" CHBC TV 1989
"Geert Maas Recent Works" CHBC Television 1986
"Footlight" SHAW Television, Kelowna 1985

Interviews :

CBC Radio West, Public Art, 2016
SHAW Television 2011, 2010, 2007, 2005, 1986 Kelowna.com 2010
CBC Radio, Provincial, "North by Northwest" 2007, 2002, 1999
CHBC Television 2007, 2005, 2004, 2002, 1999, 1997, 1996, 1994 & 1987
Roberts On the Road "Geert Maas" CHBC-TV 2004, 2001
Geert Maas Sculpture, SHAW Television 2001
Rogers 22 Television "Daytime" Ottawa 1999
CBC Radio, Regional, "Morningside" 1999
CBC Radio "On the Arts" 1996
CKIQ Radio 1996, 1993

Epilogue

As we draw to a close on this journey through the life and art of Geert Maas, I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you for joining us. Through this documentary, we have traversed decades of creativity and innovation, exploring Geert's profound contributions to the world of sculpture and beyond.

From the early days in the Netherlands to the expansive reach of his work across continents, Geert's artistic path has been both diverse and impactful. We've witnessed his evolution from a young painter to a master sculptor, seen the establishment of the Geert Maas Sculpture Gardens and Gallery in Swolgen, Limburg, continued in Kelowna, British Columbia, and celebrated numerous accolades that underscore his significant role in the arts.

This documentary has not just been a recounting of events but a tribute to the enduring spirit of creativity. It stands as a testament to how art can bridge cultures, connect communities, and inspire individuals. We hope it has offered you insights into not just the technical prowess required to create such works, but also the emotional and philosophical underpinnings that make them resonate.

For those who wish to delve deeper, we encourage you to visit the Geert Maas Sculpture Gardens and Gallery, either virtually or in person, to experience the tranquility and inspiration of Geert's work firsthand. Continue to explore, question, and appreciate the beauty of sculpture and the stories it can tell.

Thank you for your time, your interest, and your appreciation of the art that has shaped our lives. May you carry forward a piece of this artistic spirit, enriching your own journey with the creativity and passion that have defined ours in creating a cultural landmark and tourist attraction.

Elly Maas

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